FRAMEWORKS, CRIES AND IMAGERY IN LAMENTATIONS 1-5: Working Towards a Cross-cultural Hermeneutic

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

By

Gwendoline Mary Knight

FEBRUARY 2011

ABSTRACT

Frameworks, Cries and Imagery in Lamentations 1-5: Working Towards a Cross-cultural Hermeneutic

Gwendoline Mary Knight

This thesis explores how the ancient Near Eastern Book of Lamentations can be read and interpreted cross-culturally today, so that the reader stays with the structure of the text but also listens to the spontaneity of cries from a bereft and humiliated people as they grapple with grief. The first part sets the scene and develops a hermeneutical model: a double-stranded helix, which demonstrates the tensions between the textual form and psychological content of Lamentations 1-5. The two strands are connected by three cross-strands, which represent frameworks, cries and metaphorical images introduced in the opening stanza of each lyric.

In the second part, the model becomes the basis for an examination of the frameworks of the Lamentation lyrics and of psychological grief, which together demonstrate how regular patterns provide safe places from which to lament and grieve. Eventually these frameworks are difficult to maintain without interruption, so an analysis of the translation of cries of lament shows how strong feelings of emotion become audible or are silenced as they break through the containment of traditional borders and structures. In the third part motifs already introduced by the form of frameworks and the sounds of cries are developed further, through metaphorical imagery. Through this fresh approach each poem becomes a new venture by means of stance, voice, and dynamic movement, as communities of men, women and children develop coping strategies for feelings of grief.

Declaration

This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or institute of learning.

Signed:

Date:

This thesis contains 95,458 words.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to Dr. Eric Christianson for his enthusiasm and delight in Hebrew poetry, which has energised this thesis throughout and for the helpful criticism and feedback received from Revd. Dr. Ruth Ackroyd, Professor David Clough, Revd. Robert Evans, Professor Tom Greggs, Dr. Wayne Morris, Revd. Canon Professor Loveday Alexander, and colleagues in the network of the University of Chester. I am grateful to Revd. Canon Peter Lee and friends of the Parish Church of St James, Christleton for their understanding and encouragement. I have received good advice from Professor Cheryl Exum and colleagues of the Society of the Study for Old Testament. I appreciate the loyal support of my family and friends, especially Gertrude Wright who has listened over many hours to my struggles and arguments. Above all, I want to thank my husband Bob, who has lived through the ups and downs of grief and lament in all stages of my work, but still took on the job of proofreading the manuscript.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bibles and Sacred Texts

AMP	Amplified Bible
BDS	La Bible du Semeur
CEV	Contemporary English Version
DRA	Douay-Rheims
GNB	Good News Bible
HCV	Haitian Créole Version
KJV	King James Version
KNO	Knox Version
LIV	Living Bible
MSG	The Message
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NIV	New International Version Study Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha
NVI	Nueva Versión Internacional
TAN	Tanakh

Commentaries, Dictionaries Journals, Lexicons etc.

BDB	Brown, Driver Briggs
BI	Biblical Interpretation
BIJCA	Biblical Interpretation: A Journal of Contemporary Approaches
CBQ	Catholic Bible Quarterly
CBR	Currents in Biblical Research
CDCH	Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew
DCH	Dictionary of Classical Hebrew
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JOTSSA	Journal of the Old Testament Society of South Africa
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
SOTS	Society for Old Testament Study
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

FIGURES and TABLES

Figures

Tables

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART II – LAMENTATIONS 1-5

PART III - REFLECTIONS ON THE IMAGERY OF LAMENTATIONS 1-5

PART I - THEORY and METHOD

1. Introduction

> For in grief nothing 'stays put'. One keeps on emerging from a phase, but it always recurs. Round and round. Everything repeats. Am I going in circles, or dare I hope I am on a spiral. But if a spiral am I going up or down it? How often - will it be for always? C.S. Lewis

My research question concerns how the ancient Near Eastern (aNE) text of Lamentations can be read and interpreted cross-culturally, so that the reader stays with the structure of the text and the ancient ritual of lament, but also listens to the spontaneity of the cries of a bereft and humiliated people variously grappling with grief and the chaos of the situation. Gous (1992:185), in his survey of research on the book of Lamentations, suggests that 'theology is in essence an act of ordering' and 'religion is an attempt to make sense of reality'. Therefore, can our contemporary theological questions bring shape to the ancient Lamentations text and can our attempts to re-orientate ourselves in suffering today become helpful in interpreting the lyrics? Lewis (1961:49), for example, in his situation of loss encapsulates the tensions between the predictable repetition of grief experiences and the uncertainty of whether or when it will all end. Similarly, when the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem in the 6th century BCE left death and destruction, people asked how that could have happened: why had the city walls been broken down, the temple looted and destroyed, the palace and most of its buildings burned to the ground and its leaders killed or deported into Babylon? What would be the outcome of the fall of Jerusalem? Such a traumatic blow left the people disorientated, since they had relied on the security of the temple and the city as God's chosen dwelling place.

The book of Lamentations comprises five lyrics, which appear to be formal laments and pleas to a seemingly absent but angry God, but at the same time are emotional outpourings of feelings of abandonment, humiliation and brokenness. Scholars have grappled with the conflicts and ambiguities in reading Lamentations. Pyper (2001:55, 68) in his colourful intertextual comparison, writes that it is 'an uncomfortable experience', which is 'deeply shaming' and 'potentially salutary' in its outrage against violation. Nancy Lee (2010:159) in her research on lament rhythm and its

transformation suggests that there is hope of new orientation, as the book of Lamentations 'is turned to in the processing of great pain'. The aim of this thesis is to develop a flexible model to facilitate a contemporary reading of Lamentations, which Joyce (1993:304) in an inter-disciplinary reading calls 'an immensely powerful book … full of puzzles and contradictions'.

It was, indeed, the personal chaotic feelings of loss that drew me to study Hebrew laments and, in particular, the little book of Lamentations. I believe that the framework of the five lyrics and cries and imagery of aNE laments can provide a focus for working through issues, which impinge upon questions resulting from loss and disasters in our world today. This thesis, therefore, sets out to aid the process of a contemporary cross-cultural reading of the Book of Lamentations, but first as background, a brief history of scholarship on Lamentations and then on grief.

1.1 History of Scholarship on Lamentations

Westermann (1994:24) notes that Budde in 1898 was concerned with the location of Lamentations in the canon, its name and its form and contents. Boase (2006:3) divides the history of interpretation into two broad areas: issues concerning date, authorship and poetic form and the discussion of theology as initiated by Gottwald (1954). Renkema (1998) sets the text in the human history of culture and language by analysing the scholarship of translation and literary content and structure. In addition to traditional historical-critical issues, C. W. Miller (2002) shows that trends of recent research have moved on to focus on the genres and patterns in the individual poems. Miller (2001:408) also proposes that the double-voiced discourse, begun in the speakers in the text of Lamentations 1, is a dialogue that includes other voices from other times: a dialogue that does not necessarily seek closure, which would ultimately silence any voice.

Some feminist theologians have taken issue with the portrayal of the city in feminine form and traditional patriarchal readings of the Hebrew Bible, which would ignore or misinterpret female images. Niditch (1993) focuses on women and their roles in an aNE setting. Camp (1985:18) gives a poignant reminder that whilst 'historical criticism tended to ignore women because they so rarely participated in the "big events" of history'; nevertheless, 'literary criticism restored our vision by looking at

biblical stories as stories and analysing all characters in their turn'. Guest (1999:445)[1] posits that the metaphorical figure of the publicly displayed, abandoned Zion/Woman in Lamentations could become an easy scapegoat behind which the male community may hide. However, Guest (2006:395-6)[2] also recognises in her more recent work, that the textual form of the Lamentations lyrics belongs to an ancient cultural tradition of lamentation that has conventionally drawn on formulaic images and stock-in-trade language.

There has been an explosion of scholarly interest in Lamentations in the last couple of decades, particularly in intertextual comparisons and cross-cultural readings. Perhaps this is not surprising, since the often-repeated aNE questions surrounding human suffering and silence of the other, resonate with our contemporary expressions of on-going issues of grief and loss. O'Connor (2002: xiv) poignantly prefaces her commentary on 'the poetic beauty and interpretive puzzles' of the book with:

> Lamentations is about the collapse of a physical, emotional and spiritual universe of an entire people … the power of its poetry can embrace the sufferings of any whose bodies and spirits are worn down, and assaulted, whose boundaries have shrunk who are trapped, and who face foreclosed futures.

Lee and Mandolfo (2008) have drawn together an anthology of scholarly essays showing the cross-cultural nature of Lamentations in situations of war, enslaved contexts, political trauma and floods. This is illustrated by texts from the aNE, through the Middle Ages up to the present. The breadth, timelessness and diverse faces of lament are developed, as these essays 'critically examine lament forms, functions, artistries, strong participation of women, and lament genres' ability to address the painful realities of HIV-AIDS' (2008:ix). Nancy Lee (2010:5) continues to show 'how human beings throughout history and across cultures and faith traditions have forged channels and rituals for lament into a rushing river that cannot be held back' in an attempt 'to bring the varied laments of the human family under one canopy'. It is from this wealth of scholarship that I am developing my hermeneutical

[1] Guest raises the problem that the humiliation and suffering of the female figure under the hands of an avenging deity could be offensive and damaging to the female reader.
[2] Guest also suggests similarities between Lamentations and the *balag* laments of ancient Mesopotamia explored in 3.3.1.

model to focus more specifically on the tensions between the textual form and the psychological content of Lamentations 1-5 and how these conflicts can resonate cross-culturally through the frameworks, cries and imagery of grief.

1.1.1 Historical Setting

Scholars' views on the canonical position and the *Sitz im Leben* of the Book of Lamentations depend upon their understandings of the origin, in terms of dating, authorship and occasion. Renkema (1998:34) suggests that, as far as we know, there never has been a dispute about canonical status, but its positioning varies between the Masoretic and the Septuagint traditions. Traditionally, Lamentations forms part of the prophetic literature in the Christian Old Testament, following Jeremiah and before Ezekiel. This order follows the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate traditions, possibly based on the sentence 'Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah … they became customary in Israel and were incorporated into the laments' (2 Chron. 35:25). Hebrew MSS antedating the 6th century, such as the Babylonian Talmud, sometimes place Lamentations with the prophetic books, or alternatively, with the wisdom literature following psalms and proverbs. The medieval Jewish canon (post 5th century) places the book of Lamentations under the heading of its opening word, אֵיכָה *'êkāh* (Alas! How! etc.) or under the rubric of *qînôt* (laments), as one of the five writings assembled in *Megilloth* (Festive Scrolls). These writings of the Hebrew Bible contain what Gerstenberger (2001:467) calls 'important materials for Jewish worship or religious instruction'. Gerstenberger (2001:468) suggests that Lamentations is after Song of Songs and Ruth, but before Ecclesiastes and Esther in seasonal succession of the festivals. However, Hilliers (1992:xviii) suggests that the five books are in chronological order of origin, so Lamentations is fourth after Ruth, Song of Songs (Song of Solomon) and Ecclesiastes and Esther is fifth.

Commentators differ on the period of origin of Lamentations and Provan (1990:138) argues for an ahistorical interpretation. Berlin (2008:11) stresses that 'settings' for each chapter are 'fictive settings and are intended to convey their literary mise-en-scène' and is struck by the breadth of circumstances and results of destruction combined in the five perspectives of the five chapters: it is 'as if to undermine the sharp distinction between exilic and Judean literature'. Boase (2006:3) observes the 'widespread agreement that the book of Lamentations emerges in the period around

the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE', although Rudolph (1939), Weiser (1958) and Re'emi (1984) suggest an earlier dating of 597 BCE. Joyce (2001:529, 1993:304) cites datings ranging from 485 BCE (e.g. Morgenstern 1956, 1957, 1960) to as late as the Maccabean period (e.g. Treves 1963), but concludes that the Lamentations lyrics were probably written and shaped as people gathered to mourn over the site of the destroyed temple in the city of Jerusalem. Middlemas (2005:178) adds that the portraiture of the destroyed temple, invasion of the sanctuary, subjugation of the population as vassals, the human suffering from illness, starvation, and death in the poems fits well with the period in Judah following the Babylonian destruction of 587 BCE to before the reconstruction of the temple in 515 BCE. However, the precise dating of Lamentations 1-5 is not a crucial point for this thesis. What is important is that the reader interprets the structure of the text, listens to the spontaneity of the cries and sees the dynamic movement of the imagery in the turbulence of settings of devastation, suffering and grief.

Gous (1992:188-190) suggests that commentators fall into three main categories concerning original setting according to their choice of author. The first group propose a prophetic background, either from the perspective of Jeremiah or from those who shared his vision. The second group reject Jeremiah's authorship, but do not suggest an alternative, since they focus to a lesser extent on the religious crisis experienced by the people. The third group suggest a theology of Zionism and the ideology of salvation. These questions of background and proposed theological themes will now be discussed one by one.

1.1.2 Prophetic Background

Gottwald (1954) identifies the prophetic orientation of the Book of Lamentations through his discussion of the theology of doom with the theology of hope. He mentions the link with prophetic literature through e.g. Jeremiah, Amos and Zephaniah and the battle motif of 'the day of *yhwh*' as 'the time when God acts … once upon Israel in the past and upon the enemy nations in the future'. Boase (2006:1) suggests that there is a dialogic interaction between Lamentations and the pre-exilic and early-exilic prophetic literature. Such critical prophecy viewed the fall of Jerusalem as just punishment and a judgement on the sins of the people, a means of dealing with wrongdoing and error. This 'Prophetic Thread' in the Hebrew Bible

provided a means of dealing with wrongdoing and error. Westermann (1994) emphasises the prophetic teaching of judgement, underlining the importance of the acknowledgement of sin and guilt. Through confession and return there could be a renewal of relationships between *yhwh* and his people and a restoration to order in the land of Israel and Judah. Boadt (1984:410-1) suggests that in order to understand what Jeremiah was seeing in his visions of God's judgements, one needs to read Lamentations. The purpose of the lyrics was to persuade the audience to accept a new theology, to change their way of life. Nevertheless, Gous suggests that there is no conclusive proof despite the textual allusions to prophetic origins by citations from e.g. Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

1.1.3 Deuteronomic and Zionistic Background

Scholars, such as Gottwald (1954:62), Albrektson (1963:223) and Gous (1992:191) have concentrated on the tensions that occur between the Deuteronomic and Zion traditions of retribution and reward and the reality of apparent reversal: a 'theology of doom' in the destruction of Jerusalem. The Deuteronomic background, or 'just deserts' worldview, focuses on land and prosperity. The expectation is that obedience to *yhwh*'s commandments will bring blessing and conversely disobedience will bring cursing (Deut. 28). Such a prescriptive and legal requirement in religious experience seems to make no allowance for the mercy of *yhwh*, nor give room for forgiveness of others in order to bring a new basis for relationships. Re'emi (1984:11) explains that it is disloyalty that separates the people from God and as such, *yhwh* disapproves and hence brings retribution. However, Gous (1992:191) suggests 'people can contribute to order, and they have the responsibility to shape reality'.

The Zionist setting is closely linked with the temple and the throne in Jerusalem (Zion), the capital of Judah. The perpetual reign of a king/priest in Jerusalem was central to that worldview and gave the people assurance of their protection from enemies (Ps. 110; 2 Sam. 7:13). Gous (1992:191) suggests that the basic Davidic tenet is that 'order is God-given and people should adhere to God's order'. However, Albrektson (1963:223) posits that the theological tension of catastrophe and divine judgement arose in Lamentations because 'the inviolability of Zion [that is Jerusalem] had been falsified'. The reforms under King Josiah had not worked, so the people were still suffering and it seemed to be unmerited and unfair.

1.1.4 Background of Religious Crisis and City Laments

Scholars who regard the lyrics as a means of articulating and assimilating the suffering associated with the fall of Jerusalem focus on the experience of religious crisis of the people. Gous (1992:188) doubts that it is possible to examine the function and goal of the poems without taking into account the background of the author and the reader. Traditionally, debates have been around the crisis of faith, as Childs (1979:596) argues,[3] and the problems of articulating a distinctive theology of Lamentations, as debated by Dobbs-Allsopp (1997:29), Salters (1994:109) and Provan (1991:21).[4]

Assis (2007:723) suggests a rhetorical and literary response through the tensions of form and content, since 'the book's intention is to impart the belief that the destruction does not mean that people have been cast off by God, but rather that they must turn to God in their misfortunes and pray to God for salvation'. O'Connor (1992:178) maintains that the book of Lamentations was 'composed for public recitation by people', because 'laments help people to weep over their tragedy and thus release their pain' and 'continues to have liturgical life in the Jewish and Christian communities'. Nancy Lee (2008:37) notes the mourning dialogue of voices, lament performance and prophetic voice acting as comforter, typical of mourning contexts, but recognises '*other oral traditional elements* characterising lament poems as found in former Yugoslavian cultures'. Gottwald (1987:546), in his socio-literary approach, suggests that Lamentations was an 'amalgam of prophetic, Deuteronomistic, and wisdom notions that radically subordinated and neutralized the Zion and Davidic promises, and found a liturgical-pastoral way of expressing them in cult'. He concludes:

> We may take this book's deft 'eclecticism' of traditions, interconnecting a range of concepts with verve and originality, as an indication of how Jewish religious thinking in populace of post destruction Palestine adapted traditions in order to cope with the intellectual and cultural dislocations of the national catastrophe.

[3] Childs suggests 'the destruction of Jerusalem had rendered the truth of Israel's traditional faith in God's promise meaningless'.
[4] Dobbs-Allsopp contends that the theological relevance of Lamentations lies in its tragic vision, while Salters and Provan question an overall distinctive theology.

Westermann (1994:87) and Kramer (1955 in Westermann 1994:11), for example, notice the similarity of the themes and motifs of the laments over Jerusalem with the Sumerian lament over the destruction of Ur. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:7) suggests that Lamentations draws on a variety of literary genres, conventions and traditions, the most important of which is the city-lament genre from ancient Mesopotamia. Dobbs-Allsopp explains that these classic compositions depict the destruction of particular cities and their most important shrines, thus raising questions about the capriciousness of the divine assembly, the abandonment of the city by its chief gods and the stormy nature of the enemy's attack.

Pham (1999:24-5)[5] compares and contrasts the mourning ceremonies and lamentation rites in the Hebrew Bible with other aNE examples by focusing on Lamentations 1-2 and the early chapters of Job. Pham posits that the Lamentation texts 'transcend any specific event and historical context', adding that, for example, it 'is useful as a resource for those who have had to endure a history of hetero-sexist acts and discourse' and the psychological scarring that brings. Nancy Lee (2008: ix, 35) focuses on 'the singers of Lamentations' and suggests that 'textual understanding is most comprehensive when multiple approaches are engaged'. Archie Lee (2004) reads his Chinese texts cross-textually with Lamentations in his compilation of Chinese political laments over the incidents in Tiananmen Square.

Scholars, therefore, have offered a variety of competing viewpoints, which I have drawn together in Table 1 (p.9). Briefly summarised, these relate to what I am calling 'Threads'. These comprise the broad worldviews of the 'Prophetic Thread' of disaster confession and restoration, the 'Deuteronomic Thread' of blessing of land and prosperity through obedience, or cursing through disobedience, and the 'Zionist Thread' of the perpetual protection of, or divine judgement on, king, priest, temple and throne. Debates also include the 'Thread from the aNE form of individual, communal and city laments' and the 'Wisdom Thread' of act and retribution. Therefore, since these influences from other Lament rituals (e.g. Babylonian) are very difficult to view in isolation, I propose that these 'Threads' remain twisted together as

[5] Pham explains that 'after mourning for seven days and nights, Gilgamesh was still unable to reincorporate himself into the human community. He kept roaming over the steppe for years, searching for immortality'. Pham uses the opening chapters of Job to illustrate the mourning and lamentation rites in the Hebrew Bible.

background, worldview or prefiguration (Figure 1 p.19 and Figure 2 p.29) to feed into what I call the 'Textual Strand' (1.5.1). This 'Textual Strand' and its component 'Threads' will be developed and critiqued throughout this thesis, as it forms part of the background of the lament process in the religious crisis of Lamentations, which I assume to be around the period of the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE.

Table 1 Textual Threads and Lament Processes

Prophetic Thread Confession and Restoration	Broken + Relationships	Confession + of guilt	Return		=	Renewal of Relation-ships
Deuteronomic Thread Deed/ Consequence	Disobedience + Obedience +	Turning away Praise +	Worship		= =	Cursing Blessing
Zionist Thread Inviolability	Temple/ + Priest	Throne/ + King	City of Zion		=	Assurance/ Protection
Wisdom Thread Act/Retribution	Right way + Wrong Way +	Right + Attitudes Wrong + Attitudes	Just Values Unjust Values		= =	Good Fortune Bad Fortune
Lament Psalms (Babylonian) (Goldingay)	Address +	Praise +	Lament +	Petition +	Vow = of Praise	Lamentation
Lament Psalms (Hebrew Bible) (Westermann)	Plea +	Lament +	Confession + of Trust	Petition +	Vow = of Praise	Lamentation
Psalm 79 - of Disorientation (Brueggemann)	Address to God +	Complaints +	Petition +	Motivation+	Im- = precation	Lamentation
Ritual States/ Symbols of Mourning (Anderson)	Fasting +	Ashes/Dust + on one's head	Wearing of + Sackcloth	Abstain From Sexual relations	=	Lamentation

1.2 Poetic Structure

Renkema (1998:35) comments that the book of Lamentations 'manifests a remarkable literary structure'. Wiesman (1936) and Plöger (1969) maintain that the lyrics have unity of structure, dating and setting, while Brandscheidt (1983) considers them 'to be independent units and even posits four different authors' (1992:36). Both the similarities and the differences of the lyrics are mainly based on the acrostic form, the so-called *qînâ* 3 + 2 metre, typical of the dirge, and the theological content. On the subject of form and content, Miller (2002:12) notes that Jahnow (1929), Gunkel

(1923) and more recently Nancy Lee (2002) posit that Lamentations 1, 2 and 4 relate to the (political or national) funeral dirge, Lamentations 3 to the individual lament and Lamentations 5 to a communal lament. Westermann argues that the communal lament form underlies all five poems, while Kraus posits that the poems were composed as a 'lament over the ruined sanctuary'.

Vanhoozer (1990:61) suggests that poetry fights against the flattening of language or the levelling of human experience, so it stretches, cultivates and discovers new ways of communication. Landy (1987:329) proposes that the Lamentations' lyrics exult in ambiguity, as they 'articulate the inexpressible, turn death into beauty' in 'finding the solace of repeated poetic expression'. The poetic language of Lamentations 1-5, therefore, allows many possibilities of meaning in contrast to scientific language, which aspires to eliminate ambiguity by clarifying with precision 'what is' or 'what must be'. The lyrics also have a historical dimension, in that the textual style with its acrostic framework, often associated with the period of exile in 597 BCE, is recognised cross-culturally in other aNE literature such as Mesopotamian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Egyptian mourning ceremonies, as demonstrated by Pham (1999), Goldingay (1981), Gerstenberger (2001) and G.A. Anderson (1991). Nevertheless, such citations could also be seen as intertextual anecdotes, which are somewhat detached from the critical reader. In her recent critique of lyrics, Vendler (2007: xiv) aptly observes in her preface to *Yeats and Lyric Form* 'poems are hypothetical sites of speculation not position papers'. She continues:

> [poems] are not uttered from a podium or a pulpit. They are expert experiments in imagining symbols for a state of affairs, and of arranging language to suit; they are not propositions to be agreed or disagreed with. Each poem is a new personal venture made functional by technical expertise. Technical expertise alone does not suffice, either. Form is necessary and skilled embodiment of the poet's moral urgency, the poet's method of self-revelation.

Similarly, the writer(s) of the Lamentations lyrics is/are not just focusing on the description of how things are, or how nature works, but rather on the creativity of language and metaphorical movement, which gives shape for possibilities. I am arguing that Lamentations as a text is not written as a set of scientific facts, mathematical formulae, or historical evidence, rather that the lyrics are expressions of

feelings, aroused in response to unexpected events, and human suffering in the agony of broken engagements with God and society. This thesis acknowledges that the five Lamentations emphasise tragic displacement as they skilfully communicate the experience through the agility of patterns, cries and images.

1.2.1 Acrostic Form

The acrostic form is a striking feature of the lyrics. It serves variously as 'a literal and very arbitrary container for the poetry' (Dobbs-Allsopp 2002:18) or 'a container that is familiar and recognizable … for it spans the basic components of written language from beginning to end' (O'Connor 2002:13). Historically the acrostic form has been recognised by scholars such as Lohr (1906 in Renkema 1998:49), Gottwald (1987:541), and Westermann (1994:98-99), as 'rooted in notions of magic', so that the 'magical' form can be used to ward off evil. Alternatively, it can be seen as a pedagogic device such as an aide memoire for learning the alphabet, or for practising the style of funeral lament (Gottwald 1954:26), or even a completeness check to ensure that all the aspects of grief have been covered. Assis (2007:711) treats the acrostic as a rhetorical and literary phenomenon in order to explain his hypothesis that the Book of Lamentations combines form and content to make one inseparable whole. Assis (2007:716) concludes that 'an astonishing tension exists between the emotional expressions of grief and the rigid shape in which they are embedded', but their purpose is 'to bring the readers to turn to God, to lay their misfortunes before God and to pray to God'.

I am also proposing that this contrast of order and chaos is the key element. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:14) suggests that the catastrophe of 586 BCE would have provoked many conflicting thoughts and emotions among survivors, such as grief, guilt, forgiveness, anger, compassion, hope, and despair. He explains:

> These erupt as a complex of separate streams like wadis in a desert. Each following its own course through the poetry. Some end abruptly, never to be heard from again. Others end in one place but reemerge elsewhere. … The resulting flood never becomes chaotic, however, because it is contained and controlled by the constraints of the alphabetic acrostic and other prevalent formal patterns of repetition, for example the so-called *qinah* meter.

1.2.2 Cries of Lament

Moberly (1997:866-7) suggests that in Lamentations there is a conflict and also a confluence between the *qînâ* concept of lament and the 'prayer' style of lament. Moberly explains further that verbs of weeping and lamentation associated with *qînâ* as part of the mourning ritual[6] may also have become part of a perpetuated lament tradition (cf. 2 Chron. 35:25). However, Bailey (2008:153) asks 'is it possible that another type of lament existed in ancient Israel, a wordless lament identified by moans and groans?'

Lanahan (1974:41) examines how the voices of five personae deepen and broaden the reader's grasp of the dynamics of spiritual experience embodied in the book. Guest (2006:396) highlights examples of speaking out against discrimination. She cites Stone's (1999) work and the link to HIV/AIDS and Mona West's (2001) demonstration of 'how the text's voices of remembrance and mourning can be helpful in dealing with issues surrounding the disease of AIDS and the resultant death toll'. Alice Miller (1992:5, 24) also uses Lamentations to inform her work on child abuse and 'to break down the conspiracy of silence'; so that others may know that they are not alone in their suffering and 'breathe a sigh of relief'. More recently, in Segall's (2008:177) work on lament songs, stories and drama workshops in Iraq and South Africa, comparisons have been made through expressions in modern post war laments, such as 'there was nobody to cry there was no body to shatter my silence'. Arapovic (2008:164) has written a lamentation over Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina voicing the horrors of war and despair through the lines:

> in the quiet of the night
> and in the silence of the grave.

In the setting of the natural disaster in New Orleans, Fant (2008:215) uses the metaphor of widow for the city, resonating with the cries of the widow (*'almānāh*) in Lamentations 1: 'they heard how she was groaning, but none came to her … when she cried aloud none came'.

[6] The ancient mourning ritual would also include fasting, tearing clothes and wearing sackcloth (e.g. Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam. 3:31-35; Ps. 30:12; Job 16:15-16) see Chapter 8.

1.2.3 Metaphorical Imagery

Nancy Lee (2002:2) in her exploration of laments from the perspective of people from different cultures and religions, posits that 'since time immemorial, poets and singers have personified the cities, lands, and communities they inhabit', so that they as writers and we as readers come together in the repetitive cycles of human suffering. Nancy Lee (2008:36) also suggests an oral tradition approach to the Lamentations lyrics and explains that the poets and singers come from:

> a line of tradition in which all have participated in employing the culture's or subculture's previous formulas and language … but ironically the song is new with every performance, and the song really belonged *to the community*.

Dobbs-Allsopp (1997:35-6) comments that Lamentations is 'a book about suffering'. He continues: 'images of suffering appear in almost every line, piling one upon another in an unrelenting procession'. My focus is on the city of Zion metaphorically portrayed as a lonely widow (1:1), a shamed daughter (2:1), a wounded warrior (3:1), poor people, starving children, wilderness creatures (4:1) and a disgraced community (5:1). These metaphors show how the 'two for one' imagery is used to broaden the reader's vision, as they name the silences and gaps in grief and bring into focus the shocking events, which have upset conventions, destroyed traditions and caused tensions in relationships.

O'Connor (2002:3-4) describes Lamentations as 'a poetic space' and 'to read it is to enter a world apart, a world created by suggestion, image and metaphor'. O'Connor (2002:13, 31) claims that the lyrics do not remain static or confined to history or to one particular culture, but as poetry of loss they show 'the enormity of suffering as a vast universe of pain' and recognising the sufferer's true condition 'mirrors it back to them'. Gottwald (1988:646) adds, moreover, that the lyrics 'evoke scenes of catastrophe and articulate the psychic and religious trauma of the survivors'. This thesis will develop and use a model as a conceptual container and a reflective space from which to express and empathise with lament and grief.

1.3 Intertextual, Interdisciplinary and Cross-cultural Models of Lament

Throughout the history of interpretation of the Lamentations lyrics scholars have noted the tension that arises between the traditional aNE acrostic form and the spontaneity of expression in the content of the Lamentations text, by the use of patterns, frameworks and models. Poetic shape continually gives a foreground and a background, a present and a past, an up and a down, thus providing order in chaos, allowing sound and silence, stillness and action, in the on-going uncomfortable experience of suffering and loss.

Intertextually, poets, such as Yeats also demonstrate a sense of diction, structural evolution and perfect shape in poetry. Yeats (1972:211 in Vendler 2007: iv, 2) declared that it was technique that created the major part of a work of art, enabling it to leave the merely personal and become timeless:

> If [in poetry] the real world is not altogether rejected, it is but touched here and there, and into places we have left empty we summon rhythm, balance, pattern, images, that remind us of vast passions, the vagueness of past times. … We shall express personal emotion through … a style that remembers many masters that it may escape contemporary suggestion.

Just as Yeats used lunar structures, historical gyres[7] and geometric abstractions, so the author(s) of Lamentations used known poetic architecture, such as acrostics, lament patterns, key words, repetitive cries and imagery drawn from existing psalms, laments and complaints. These shapes and word patterns were not only recognised intertextually in the aNE, but continue to resonate cross-culturally through poetry today.

A proliferation of hermeneutics has grown up during a period when traditional forms of critical exegesis, although still important, have started to wear thin. Biblical Studies are benefiting from the creativity of insights from other disciplines and in some cases from multi-disciplinary approaches. In the absence of a coherent theological message

[7] Yeats used the imagery of the gyre, a spiralling form or swirling vortex to capture contrary motions inherent within the process of history. Yeats used the word 'gyre(s)' in many of his poems e.g. *The Second Coming* and *The Gyres.* Vendler (2007:109) suggests 'the incantatory power of reduplicative language … served Yeats as an index of magically intended writing throughout his life'. Repetition by spell-casting is the guarantee of revolution. Westermann (1994:99) posits that the same scholars also see the acrostic form in Lamentations as rooted in notions of magic. See Chapter 2 on the use of the Lamentations acrostic framework.

and in the face of a deep ambivalence about hope for the future, Joyce (1993:308) and Reimer (2002) draw on the psychological theory of Kübler-Ross as a framework within which some of the ambiguities and inconsistencies of the text of Lamentations could be understood. Joyce (1993:304, 315) suggests that although the application of insights from other disciplines requires careful critique, nevertheless, psychological factors such as processes of grief may have played a part in the conventional tradition and stylized art from which the writers of Lamentations drew. Reimer (2002:545, 557) in his psychological reading suggests that 'the problem is often the ancient one of a particular view of the workings of a world being challenged or overturned by an experience of loss'. Likewise, Brueggemann (1977) in his work on the form of grief in the Lament Psalms, recognises a link between the Kübler-Ross stages of grief and the Biblical lament. Brueggemann (1995:54) points out 'the psychotherapeutic importance of fully expressing hurt and rage' implying that a psychological framework was already a recognised and acceptable part of religious life in the aNE. Guest (2006:400) emphasises that psychological stress requires an outlet just as much as physical assault. Linafelt (2000b) talks about Lamentations in terms of 'survival literature': perhaps joining both literary and psychological aspects together. The tensions between the textual form and emotional content in Lamentations have thus been debated by using a variety of patterns, frameworks and models.

In order to produce an interdisciplinary model that would compare and contrast the lyrics of Lamentations and psychological aspects cross-culturally, I shall now assess eight conceptual models used by scholars for the Biblical text as ways of connecting concepts, organising thoughts and allowing emotions to flow. These are a one-dimensional linear model, and various two-dimensional (or three-dimensional) models of frame, dynamic circle, cyclone, arc, spiral, gyre and helix.

1.3.1 Linear Model

The approach I am calling the 'Linear Model' is a one-dimensional, straight-line model, which could be applied to the Deuteronomic deed and consequence, blessing and cursing principle (Deut. 28:20), the wisdom act and retribution idea and the application of an all-time fixed formula, that God reigns and Zion is inviolable (cf. Pss. 46 and 48). This type of unidirectional sequence is recognisable in the Hebrew acrostic Psalm 119, where the A-Z rules move in a forward direction towards a

predictable outcome. Alternatively, the model could apply to the idea that there is an order with clear prophetic directions to follow: 'whenever you deviate to the right or to the left, your ears will heed the command from behind you: "This is the road; follow it!"' (Isa. 30:21). Bail (2003) suggests that the speech in Lamentations is not linear: 'it does not have chronological strands of action and thought'.

In my view, the one-dimensional, uni-directional, irreversible linear approach does not give space for the variation of the emotional 'ups and downs' of personal relational experience, or for spontaneous creativity in development. There seems to be no provision for the backward and forward movement in the suffering of tragedy, abuse and abandonment left within the community. Neither is there allowance made for the repetitive round and round movement to work through the seemingly unmerited antagonistic attitude by God and others. The Lamentations lyrics do not provide a yes/no answer or even a universally accepted correct solution to suffering. Joyce (1993:305) in his psychological reflections on Lamentations shows that the pathway of grief lacks coherence and consistency and is full of ambivalence about the future. Reimer in his intersection of psychological and theological questions notes the importance of intersecting worldviews, so that during a period of loss particular views of the workings of the world are challenged or overturned. But there are more frameworks with other dimensions to explore.

1.3.2 Frame and Picture

A structure of picture and frame can also be a helpful rhetorical device for reading texts. Christianson shows this clearly in his work on the persona *Qoheleth* in the text of Ecclesiastes. Christianson (1998:52) explains: 'frames demarcate the field of interpretation in decisive, non-negotiable terms that disturb (or otherwise influence) the flow of meaning between viewer and object, reader and text'. The shape of the frame could thus enhance or detract from the understanding of the picture. Each of the five Lamentations lyrics has a poetic frame variation of 22 verses, based on different patterns of the twenty-two consonants of the Hebrew alphabet. Within each frame, there are images that show their suffering on their faces, but if viewers are focusing their gaze on the acrostic, or the stage of grief, they could miss the importance of the disturbing stance or emotional attitude portrayed in the imagery.

Alternatively, if the acrostic frame is removed, as in most translated texts, the imagery is unrestrained by the frame of history, language or culture.[8]

There are various proposals about the acrostic in aNE poetry, but the more widely accepted theory is that it expresses a notion of completeness, that everything has been covered from start to finish. Morse (2003:115, 117-8) suggests there is 'an implicit order under-girding the chaos'. He likens the Book of Lamentations to Walter Benjamin's unfinished 'Arcades Project', where a *montage* of citations and comments drawn from predominantly French and German sources are grouped together according to general subjects into 'convolutes' or coils. These 'convolutes' are coincidentally also ordered according to an alphabetical outline.

However, I am arguing that suffering, lament, complaint and grief are maintained from Lam. 1:1 to 5:22: there is very little let up in, or escape from, the twists and turns of suffering. Thus in a citation of Frye and Ricoeur, Valdes (1991:85) suggests that 'by articulating emotions and feelings each poem portrays a new way of dwelling and thus opens up the experience of metamorphosis of both language and reality'. Therefore, although the comforting[9] poetic A-Z framework sits in tension with the possibly exaggerated picture[10] of lament, nevertheless, the typical back and forth movement and fluidity of grief is likely to overcome the restrictions of the frame.

1.3.3 Dynamic Circle

Westermann (1981:70) gives little credit to the acrostic frame, but suggests a dynamic circle of lament: a movement of plea to praise as in the Psalms of Lament (e.g. Psalms 74, 79). As shown in Table 1 (p.9), the cyclical frame consists of five elements: first, an address and introductory petition; second, a lament; third, a turning toward God by confession of trust; fourth, a petition; and fifth, a vow of praise. Similarly, Goldingay (1981:86) sees 'an interweaving of praise and lament' in the Psalms, as there is a struggle to be true to past experience and the conviction of faith and also to face up to the present experience of affliction. Goldingay (1981:85-86) points out that

[8] See Figures 8, 10, 12 and 14-17 in the following chapters for contextual frames and images.
[9] The acrostic form is comforting, because it is repetitive and a well-known aNE poetic tradition.
[10] Heath (1996:25) suggests that portrait painters in rendering the individual form 'paint people as they are, but make them better-looking'. The Lamentations poet may exaggerate motifs to portray a particular message of grief, but I would not say that they are 'dressed up' as in a comedy.

Babylonian psalmody also comprises the previously mentioned five elements, but moves in one invariable and irreversible direction. However, he posits that the Hebrew psalmody has a cyclical pathway rather than a linear trajectory, because the end of one psalm can become the beginning of another.

For the purpose of Lamentations, however, unlike the lament Psalms, the dynamic circle is incomplete. This is because there is very little praise in the Lamentations text, except for a fleeting section in the third lyric, so the circle needs a textual lacuna,[11] an emotional space wherein the destructive path of fire and arrows, gives space to breathe[12] and keep things alive. However, the model should not be sequential and uni-directional, because I am positing that the lamentation and grief experience is chaotic and unpredictable. The dynamic circle with its irreversible direction, therefore, does not seem to aid this interpretation. However, the stormy dimensions of a metaphorical cyclone may do so.

1.3.4 Metaphorical Cyclone

The idea of the metaphorical cyclone seems to fit the turbulence in the text well. Middlemas (2004:84) sees cohesion in the five poems of Lamentations and proposes that the form of the book is 'designed to elicit the effect of a whirlwind'. She highlights the shape of the book as a 'cyclone with restful eye in the centre surrounded by chaotic images of unabated violence, destruction, disease, and despair, truly human suffering on a grand scale'. Middlemas (2004:89-90) suggests that the Lamentations poet 'depicts the city of Jerusalem encircled in the swirling clouds of *yhwh*'s anger'. The metaphorical cyclone[13] draws attention to a city engulfed by a storm-wind, which is 'surrounded by a dizzying array of images of suffering and misery', so that like the peaceful eye of the cyclone 'the verses of hope in Lam. 3.22-39 become eclipsed'. Lanahan (1974:46) also concludes that the dominant image of Lamentations 3 is 'encirclement', as illustrated by the fact that the speaker has been imprisoned, trapped in the drowning pit and surrounded by enemies. This stormy

[11] See Chapter 2:5 for further discussion on how this works in Lamentations.

[12] Van Leeuwen (1999:52) notes that special techniques such as the circular breathing, which Aborigines use in singing (Kartomi), are needed to convey the continuous, never-ending, never-changing, unmeasured idea of eternity in music and singing.

[13] A tropical cyclone occurs when spiralling winds surround a central area of low atmospheric pressure, where there is complete calm. This image of a natural disaster today can translate into the turbulence of aNE lament, such as in Lamentations, and into the whirlwind setting when God answers Job.

cyclonic shape has also helped to develop my approach, as it has triggered the idea of engulfment and the dynamic nature of traumatic events, but the shape does not lend itself to effectively modelling the tension and cross-links between the Lamentations text and human responses in grief which I wish to focus on. Furthermore, the shape inherently suggests either expansion or contraction, which could bring the process to an early conclusion and not allow the repetitive process that the lyrics suggest. The search for a more suitable shape continues.

1.3.5 Ricoeur's Hermeneutical and Mimetic Arcs

Bergant (2002:1-16) engages in a test case on Lam. 1:1-11 using Ricoeur's interpretative theory of hermeneutical and mimetic arcs. Her aim is to offer contemporary meaning through 'a way of knowing that flows back into ethical practice, a way of knowing that opens naturally into a way of living'. This means that both the text-orientated critical analysis and the reader-orientated theories of human experience are taken seriously. In my view, the application of Ricoeur's (1984) theory of a hermeneutical arc is important in the understanding and interpretation of the tension between the form and content in the Lamentations text. Ricoeur's hermeneutics (1984, 1985) emanate from his understanding of time as 'lived' time and not 'clock' time,[14] the metaphorical 'being as' or 'seeing as' (1984:11) and the

Prefiguration ***:w Figuration***

Figure 1 Ricoeur's Hermeneutical and Mimetic Arcs (in Stiver 2001:58, 75)

[14] Vanhoozer (1990:99) explains that there is historical time (*histoire* or *Geschichte*) where what actually happened is reported, cosmic time which involves days and events linked to the sun and calendar and then there is time where persons are conscious of past (memory) and future (hope).

dynamics of life as movement. Ricoeur develops the three phases of 'prefiguration-configuration-refiguration', which I am suggesting match phases of the Lamentations lyrics. The hermeneutic comprises a backward look to how things were i.e. the setting before the disaster took place (prefiguration), a present physical, emotional, and spiritual expression of how things are (configuration), whilst an iterative process continues to work on the way ahead out of disaster (refiguration).[15] As can be seen in Figure 1 (p.19) prefiguration is the first point of contact with the hermeneutical arc and is where textual interpretation begins. It refers to the pre-understanding, a worldview, a background, a *Sitz im Leben* that is brought to a text. It is a 'prejudice', in Gadamer's (1988:240) words *Vorurteil*, which is 'a judgement that is given before all the elements [aspects and trajectories] that determine a situation have been finally examined'. So prefiguration or *préjugé* shapes the reader's approach to the text and is the reader's prejudice towards what Gadamer (1988:246) refers to as 'old authorities' and 'prestigious trajectories'. These could relate to powers, such as religious and political regimes, or social traditions. It relates to the situation of reversal and the experience of grief and the reader's pre-disposition to 'over-hastiness' in coming to a judgement before a careful analysis or configuration has taken place. This prejudice occurs when the reader just follows the tramlines of tradition and responds with automatic reactions to the status quo with little or no reflection or wish to change a particular worldview. Alternatively, at prefiguration stage the reader could be numbed or shocked by the horrific events and be in a state of denial, which could be carried through into the next phase.

Configuration is the central phase on the arc, where there is time and space for explanation and understanding of the text through exegesis and analysis. It is what Kant (in Vanhoozer 1990:93) refers to as 'reflective judgment', where new connections are made. There is a corresponding response from the reader's grief and loss experience on the mimetic arc. A sense of longing and belonging is nourished and dynamism is imparted to the experience of the event in the world. Brueggemann (1980:5-10) suggests that configuration occurs between prefiguration, which draws on the reader's world-view, and refiguration, which opens up the shape of a new horizon. However, at the final stage of refiguration Ricoeur searches for a middle ground, for

[15] Sometimes referred to as New Figuration.

the way in which there is a fusion of horizons between the hermeneutical and the mimetic arc. It is a coming together between the world of the text for first readers and an appropriated world of subsequent readers, thus a human rapprochement through the language and experience of life.

Brueggemann follows Ricoeur's understanding of the dynamics of life as a movement and proposes the sequence of 'orientation-disorientation-re-orientation' as a helpful way to understand the use and function of the Psalms. 'Orientation', Brueggemann (1980:6) says, reflects 'a sense of the orderliness, goodness and reliability of life'. There is a marked absence of tension, as illustrated by some Hebrew linear trajectories, such as the acrostic Psalms 37, 112 and 145. However, Brueggemann (1980:5) posits that human experience 'includes those dangerous and difficult times of dislocation and disorientation when the sky does fall and the world does come to an end'. 'Disorientation' occurs when people are driven to extremities, both psychologically and socially, and questions are raised. 'Re-orientation', Brueggemann (1995:54) continues, is when 'life has disintegrated but has been formed miraculously again'. The recognition of such reversal and grief is thus a process. However, the Lamentations hermeneutic is a repetitive process, which needs more than a line, a frame, a circle, a cyclone or a single arc, so the spiral and gyre will be assessed.

1.3.6 Spiral or Gyre

The hermeneutical arc does not necessarily stay as a single arc, but as there is need for further interpretative experience, so it turns round and round repeatedly, backwards over old ground and forwards to new horizons - up and down. Ricoeur suggests that it could become a spiral, not simply regular or patterned, but rather a form of struggle for equilibrium and survival in life. As mentioned earlier, Yeats uses the imagery of a three-dimensional spiral or a 'gyre', which begins at a fixed point, grows wider like a funnel, then contracts again to a point, but this concept of expansion and contraction has already been discounted as being unsuitable in 1.3.4. Nevertheless, the ideas of cyclical, repetitive movement have led me to propose a helix, in fact a double-stranded helix, which has a 'Textual Strand' from which to interpret the ritual of Lamentation and a 'Psychological Strand' from which to experience the emotions of grief.

In summary, as will be explained further in 1.5.1, the 'Textual Strand' will represent the background and form of the ritual lament of each of the five Lamentations lyrics and is held in tension with the 'Psychological Strand', which represents the experience, expression and acting out of grief in situations of disaster. Furthermore, these two main strands will be drawn together or kept apart by three 'Cross-strands' (see 1.5.3) comprising frameworks, cries and images, as they connect the Lamentations text and the psychological feelings of grief. However, before these strands are explained further and the model is developed in more detail, an overview of grief scholarship will confirm the background to the 'Psychological Strand' and bring further dimensions to the links on the three 'Cross-strands'.

1.4 History of Scholarship of Grief

Archer (1999:1) in his account of the historical background to grief research, suggests that grief has been understood in three different ways: as 'a natural human reaction, as a psychiatric disorder and as a disease process'. For example, Burton (1651 in Archer 1999:12) from his knowledge of history, literature and medicine of the time, deduces that 'grief is a cruel torment, a domineering passion'. Bishop Lowth in his 'Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews' (1815 in Gottwald 1954:63) describes the grand scale of tragedy as: 'grief is generally abject and humble, less apt to assimilate with the sublime; but when it becomes excessive, and predominates the mind, it rises to a bolder tone, and becomes heated to fury and madness'.

Archer (1999:13) points out that Charles Darwin in his work on emotional expressions 'carefully described the mechanics of weeping' and explained that 'grief involves an active frantic form and a passive depressive one'. Freud (1938 in Archer 1999:16) posited that 'grief is an active process involving the struggle to give up the emotional and internal attachment to a love-object, a process which takes much time and energy'. Following Freud's theory, a number of empirical studies have been carried out by interview and questionnaire on community samples. Archer (1999:23) records that in addition to such empirical studies there are many theories of grief based on assumptions, folklore and interpretation, which go way beyond the evidence.

Klass, Silverman and Nickman (1996:3-5) posit that making sense of grief through a set of interactions or processes that make sense of multifarious data, in other words by

using a model, is a 20th century phenomenon. Klass et al. (1996:20) suggest that grief is about 'construction and reconstruction of a world and of our relationship with significant others'. The suffering of grief varies in intensity according to the person and the setting. Grief experience can arise from the deep pain of the death of a loved one, or the loss of a sense of order and security, whether through the loss of people, of animals, of possessions, of employment, of health, of one's home, one's nationality, religious beliefs, or one's identity. Archer (1999:1) explores various ways of viewing grief biologically and psychologically in different cultures and in different times in history. He posits that 'grief can be described as a natural human reaction since it is a universal feature of human existence irrespective of culture, although the form and intensity of its expression varies considerably'. Archer continues that although grief normally occurs in the context of 'the loss of a loved one through death' nevertheless it 'can occur when a close relationship is ended through separation, or when a person is forced to give up some aspect of life that was important'.

Bereavement is, therefore, about the state of loss, perhaps of a relationship and as Stroebe and Schut (1998:7) suggest 'mourning refers to the social expressions or acts expressive of grief: both are shaped by the practices of a given society or cultural group'. Oliviere, Hargreaves and Monroe (1998:121) summarise the process as 'bereavement is an event; grief is the emotional process, mourning is the cultural process'. Stroebe, Stroebe and Hansson (1998:5) in their bereavement theory, distinguish the terms as follows:

> *Bereavement* is the objective situation of having lost someone significant; *grief* is the emotional response to one's loss; and *mourning* denotes the actions and manner of expressing grief, which often reflect the mourning practices of one's culture.

Thus a multi-faceted response to loss has, among others, physical, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, spiritual, social and philosophical dimensions. Scholars differ over the extent to which grief is a universal or culture-specific experience. Triandis (1995) distinguishes between individualistc societies, where individuals view themselves as independent entities, and collectivist societies, who see themselves as part of a whole and are motivated by duties to the group.

1.4.1 Grief Studies

According to Archer (1999:18), Lindemann (1944), a psychiatrist, carried out the earliest well-known empirical study of grief. Lindemann followed Freud in his description of grieving as an active process, referring to it as 'emancipation from the bondage to the deceased', which involved 'readjustment to the changed environment, and the formation of new relationships'. Lindemann observed the painful process and mental struggles for this detachment to take place. In Archer (1999:19) the first study of bereavement among community samples, published in the UK in 1958, was carried out by Marris, a psychologist, who provided a more organised and systematic description of the typical grief pattern of widows. Archer notes that Marris concluded that key responses to grief in their social context included denial, restlessness, escapism, insomnia, hostility, withdrawal and physical symptoms indicative of deteriorating health. Gorer (1965 in Archer 1999:20) applied his psychoanalytical techniques to anthropology, through his sample of widows, widowers and people bereaved in other ways, and identified two types of grief manifestations. The first he called 'mummification', when the person in grief kept home and life routines exactly as they were before death, and the second he called 'despair', because the person became emotionally flat and lived in isolation. During the 1960s, several influential theoretical articles were published on the processes of grief (e.g. Averill, Bowlby and Parkes) and on death and dying (e.g. Kübler-Ross). Table 2 (p.25) gives a series of grief stages and tasks as examples.

1.4.2 Stages and Tasks of Grief

Researchers have traditionally posited a grief cycle of sequential stages of grief phases, but over the last 40 years there has been a move to look at the processes, dynamics and experiences of grief. Table 2 (p.25) shows a variety of threads, which feed into the Psychological Strand illustrating how some scholars from the disciplines of psychiatry, psychology and pastoral and grief counselling have approached and considered grief. The first 'stage' of grief shows shock, numbness, denial and disbelief as common features, but there are also other experiences, such as loneliness, restlessness, anger and regression. The final 'stage' shows that after a process of grief has taken place, acceptance occurs through recovery or resolution, adaptation or re-integration. However, Spiegel's adaptation stage includes grief symptoms of withdrawal (isolation), weeping (depression or all stages) and searching for the guilty

party (anger and bargaining). The disorientation of mourning and grief in the in-between stages varies in sequence, but can involve mourning rituals, such as the funeral, experiences of crying, anger, bargaining, protest, yearning and searching, despair and depression. As Bowlby (1980:85) points out 'these phases are not clear

Table 2 Psychological Threads and Grief Processes

Scholar and Discipline	Description of Process	Stages and Tasks of Grief				Final Stage/ Task
Kübler-Ross 1969 Psychiatry	5 stages for death and dying/grief	1. Denial and Isolation	2. Anger	3. Bargaining	4. Depression	5. Acceptance
Bowlby 1961	4 stages Psycho-analysis of mourning	1. Numbness and disbelief; outbursts of anger	2. Yearning and searching	3. Dis-organisation, despair and apathy		4. Re-organisation and recovery
based on **Bowlby 1960**	3 stages Young Children's Reaction to separation	1. Protest	2. Despair			3. Detach-ment
Averill 1968 Psychology	3 stages	1. Shock	2. Despair			3. Recovery
Parkes 1972	4 stages Grief in Adult life	1. Numbness	2. Pining	3. Depression		4. Recovery
Spiegel 1973 Pastoral psychology	4 stages	1. Shock; regression	2. Controlled Stage social rites of mourning			3. Regression, Withdrawal, weeping, searching for guilty party and adaptation
Worden 1983	4 tasks Grief Counselling And Grief Therapy	1. Accept reality of loss (not believing)	2. Experience the pain of grief (not feeling)	3. Adjust to a world without the deceased (not growing)		4. Embark on New life but find a lasting connection with the deceased (not moving forward)
Bowman 2000	5 stages Teenagers Disability And recovery from injury	1. Initial Impact: shock, numbing emotion, anxiety	2. Defense Mobilization bargaining and denial	3. Initial Realization: anger, depression crying	4. Retaliation anger and hostility aimed at others	5. Re-integration. Acknowledge implication of disability
Clark 2004 Psychiatry	4 stages Work with Grieving Adults	1. Shock and Protest, numbness and disbelief, restlessness	2. Pre-occupation	3. Dis-Organisation, Despair, to acceptance of loss		4. Resolution

cut, and any one individual may oscillate for a time back and forth between any two of them'. Rosenblatt (in Klass et al. 1996:45) presents the evidence that 'strong feelings of grief can recur over a life-time' and discusses how this could be so and some of the implications.

1.4.3 Cries of Grief

Worden (1983:29) notes that calling out in yearning and searching for the person who has gone, sighing in a physical sense of breathlessness and crying tears to relieve emotional stress are some of the specific behaviours frequently associated with grief. An active form of crying, which is referred to as 'sobbing', is especially characteristic of bereavement. Stroebe and Stroebe (1987 in Archer 1999:52) in their examination of the crying aspect of grief, conclude that 'this is a universal response despite cultural differences, which sometimes drastically curtail grief and in other cases prolong it'. However, Littlewood (1992:52) suggests that 'the presence or absence of crying in itself may tell little of the nature of grief'. Rosenblatt (in Klass et al. 1996:50)[16] notes the pressure to minimise and end grief, and describes a case of a woman who still started to cry every time she mentioned her deceased husband's name even 6 years after his death. In this case, the disaster had not just involved a single event. Archer (1999:77) notes the benefits of expressing feelings of grief in a citation by Shakespeare. Malcolm tells MacDuff, whose wife and children have been killed by Macbeth:

> Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
> Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.

Others have called this cathartic process a talking-cure (Parkes 1972:21-2). Apart from words or silence to express grief, Bailey (2008:160) suggests the importance of moaning and groaning in the slave songs of the African-American lament traditions, where there were 'prolonged sounds shaped to a melodic line' and 'sometimes they had words attached, sometimes not'.

[16] The story is of a woman who had lost her husband in a farm accident, so that not only his death, but also the gruesome way he died, haunted her. Subsequently, in addition, she had to sell the farm, so she suffered the loss of a herd of cows and the house. Her stepsons filed a lawsuit against her and her son, who came to live at home, left school and became direction-less, so she had to deal with these added situations of grief.

1.4.4 Images of Grief

McFague (1983: 15, 23) explains that:

> thinking metaphorically means spotting a thread of similarity between two dissimilar objects, events or whatever, one of which is better known than the other, and using the better known one as a way of speaking about the lesser known.

I am using the model[17] of a hermeneutical helix with its threads and strands to link metaphorical images, which have been used throughout history and in literature to portray bereavement, grief and loss. Widows, personified cities, warriors, starving and dying children have been the subject of poems, songs, paintings, films and plays. Likewise, metaphorical images, such as stones, weapons, water, fire and mythical creatures play an important part in the stories of war, disaster, disease and death. Some working definitions of simile, metaphor and metonymy are outlined at the beginning of Part III in Chapter 4.

1.4.5 Intertextual, Interdisciplinary and Cross-cultural Models of Grief

In 1.1.9 above, six conceptual models drawn from Lamentations scholarship were proposed and, now, a re-examination will take place in the light of grief scholarship. First, since stages, phases and tasks of grief are not necessarily sequential and cannot be objectively scheduled into clock time, or calendar and phase sequence, the linear shape would be restrictive. More flexibility is needed. The frame and picture model, although useful to set the scene and link to paintings, nevertheless, does not give a clear idea of the turbulent human behaviour typical of the grief process. The dynamic circle is unidirectional and again suggests a fixed repetitive pattern, which, in respect of grief, is disputed by scholars. The cyclone, spiral and gyre are all helpful models but lack the flexibility needed for the comparison of the variety of patterns of lament and grief behaviour.[18] Thus, a repetitive arc, which becomes a helix rather than a spiral or gyre, would allow the reader of Lamentations, from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, to process or configure grief and lament repeatedly and in any order, over and over again, until recovery and adaptation takes place.

---

[17] McFague adds that models are a further step along the route from metaphorical to conceptual language.

[18] What Van Leeuwen (1999:55) calls polyrhythmic. Chernoff (1979:201) refers to the rhythms in African cultures as 'weaving in and out', because there are several rhythms going on at once.

1.5 Methodology

The repetitive patterns, cries and images in the lyrics, the open-ended nature of Hebrew Lamentations and the possibility of cross-cultural resonance with grief today particularly interested me. The rhythms of the five Lamentations lyrics and the ancient traditions of lament are witnesses to the confusion and pain that followed the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in ancient Judah and in my view can be translated into the suffering and loss in our war-torn world today. In the reading of the Lamentations lyrics, an all-inclusive, expansive A-Z poetic style of lament does not advocate reductionism of suffering, nor does it gloss over the importance of individual commitment in relationship, rather, the great diversity of imagery generates a conflict of voices. This thesis now sets out to develop a hermeneutical helix as a model, which I am proposing can help the reader to recognise patterns, cries and imagery in the text, which, in my view, become vital to understanding the way ahead in the configuration of trauma and ruptured relationships.

1.5.1 'Textual Strand' and 'Psychological Strand'

As already discussed, the expected order of well-known theological threads of prophetic doom/hope, deuteronomic deed/consequence, Zionist inviolability, wisdom act/retribution in the Hebrew Bible is brought into question through the unexpected experience of chaos and broken relationships in Lamentations 1-5. These threads of experience are not linear in the sense of being uni-directional, nor irreversible in flow, nor assuredly forward looking in the turbulence of grief. Neither is there a mechanical predictability based on a deed/consequence style of life. Instead, there is conflict between order and chaos, constants and variables. It requires a lengthy process of configuration before a new and acceptable way ahead is found, if indeed it is found, out of the devastation and disaster. This is also reflected in scholars' conflicting views on a range of processes, stages, tasks and phases of grief and how grief events come to an end, if ever, in our experience today.

1.5.2 Double-stranded Helix Model

The double-stranded helix model for Lamentations 1-5 (Figure 2 p.29) is built by using two strands which focus on the tension between the textual structures of poetic lament and the psychological experience of grief in the content of the lyrics. The 'Textual Strand' comes out of an old worldview, which Ricoeur calls prefiguration. It

is an amalgam of what Gadamer refers to as 'old authorities' and 'prestigious trajectories' of Biblical land and promise (Deuteronomic), temple and throne (Zionist), confession and restoration (prophetic e.g. Jeremiah and Isaiah) and religious crisis (e.g. Psalms of lament and Job), which I am suggesting symbolises the complexity of life experience in the Hebrew Bible (Table 1 p.9). The prefiguration or historical 'memory' is that *yhwh* in relationship with his people, blesses and protects them and his people respond to *yhwh* in sacrificial praise, worship and obedience to the law and the prophets. If, however, the people turn away from worshipping *yhwh* then cursing and broken relationships result. Nevertheless, in the Hebrew Bible, liberating possibilities are opened up for sufferers to bewail their suffering, voice their laments to God and to the community, question the worldview and thus work towards refiguration through texts such as Psalms of Lament, Job and Lamentations.

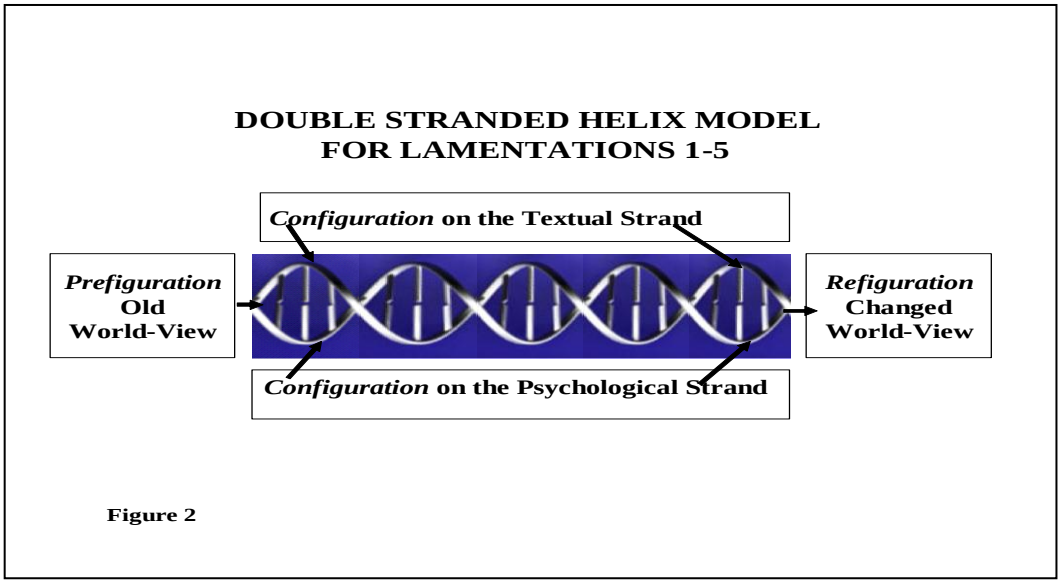


Figure 2

The 'Psychological Strand' in Figure 2 also has various threads intertwining from its historical background of scholarly research in psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and pastoral counselling, which influence not only the reader's explanation of the text, but also the reader's understanding and expression of human grief. The setting on the 'Psychological Strand' before disaster, death and loss are experienced, represents wellbeing, where human beings are at peace with the self and happily relating to the other, as they are grouped and attached in families, communities and nations. If there is disaster, death or loss, then the setting on the strand changes from praise to

lamentation: a time of ceremonial mourning, and a process of grief configuration. Strategies may be needed to cope with feelings of abandonment, detachment, exclusion and hurt, in order to work towards recovery and new relationships (Table 2 p.25).

We have so far discussed the textual threads and background to the lament processes relating to the 'Textual Strand' of the five Lamentations lyrics and the corresponding 'Psychological Strand' comprising the rationale for stages and tasks of human grief. These form an integral part of the background, reading and interpretation, bringing dynamic movement towards new possibilities of understanding cross-culturally. The model of the helix presents the reader with a conceptual form based on the textual process of lament in five Lamentations lyrics, as it compares and contrasts human psychological grief patterns. The two main strands of the helix, the 'Textual Strand' and the 'Psychological Strand', become intertextual, interdisciplinary and cross-cultural devices for the configuration of lament form and the expression of emotional content in Lamentations 1-5 and in our world today. The reader joins the model from his/her worldview and past events (prefiguration); the strands take the reader through the turbulence of the present lamentation and grief process (configuration) through to new possibilities or restoration (refiguration). However, as subsequent chapters will show, this is neither linear nor uni-directional, but an iterative process from reader to text and text to reader, dynamically back and forth along the helix and the way this works is through the matching and disagreement, consonance and dissonance of textual lament with psychological grief through three 'Cross-strands'.

1.5.3 Three 'Cross-strands'

The three 'Cross-strands' form connections between the 'Textual Strand' and the 'Psychological Strand' on the helix model (Figure 3 p.31). On the first 'Cross-strand' there is a comparing and contrasting of the frameworks of the *aleph* to *tav* acrostics and lament forms in the text with the frameworks of grief phases, stages and tasks in psychological responses. This is addressed in detail in Chapter 2. The second 'Cross-strand' represents lament pleas and cries, from a variety of textual translations, as silenced or interpreted by contemporary grief cries in an examination in Chapter 3. The third 'Cross-strand' represents metaphorical images, as they act out the stance and behaviour of individuals and communities in suffering and disaster. They raise

questions as to how, when and whether grief will end, not only in the aNE context, but also in our world today and will be covered in Chapters 4-9.

In summary, as shown on the Motif Section of the Helix Model in Figure 3, the 'Textual Strand', 'Psychological Strand' and three 'Cross-strands' represent a conceptual framework for Lamentations, allowing a fresh interpretation of the text and also articulating meaning for thinking about cross-cultural grief.

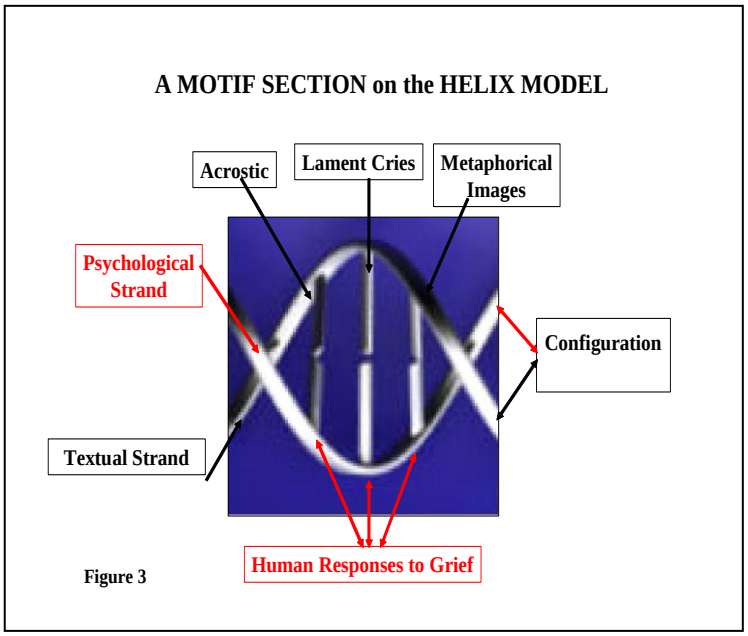


Figure 3

Rimmon-Kenan (1987:177) draws on Freud's multi-layered reciprocity of 'remembering and repeating' to show the affinity between literature and psychoanalysis. So by using the helix and the resonation between the three Cross-strands the emotions of grief on the 'Psychological Strand' are constantly re-lived through the frameworks, cries and imagery of poetry on the 'Textual Strand'. Repetition in the five lyrics of lamentation, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters, may thus become a way of working through aspects of grief. Textually, it acts as a script or a sequence of familiar episodes, which can be performed over and over again, as motivated by an emotion.[19] However, psychologically it could also lead to entrapment in the text, in stages of grief, or indeed on the helix: what

[19] See Oatley (2004:106), who suggests that 'the idea of scripts comes from the theatre, from the idea of a set of lines from which a role can be enacted'. He uses the idea of script 'to describe the outline, or frame, for interpersonal relations, that is set up by an emotion: happiness sets up a script for co-operation, anger sets up conflict and so on'.

Rimmon-Kenan (1987:177)[20] refers to as 'textual neurosis' or a compulsion to repeat as an act of remembering what may have been forgotten or repressed. These problems of 'getting stuck', coping strategies, and expectation of closure, will also be dealt with by comparing and contrasting the unity and diversity of the Lamentations lyrics with the commonality and variations of grief experience.

1.5.4 Scope and Limitations

For matters of time and scope, detailed exegesis is focused on the five Lamentations lyrics and more specifically the opening stanzas, although other lament texts and poems will be referred to and used to demonstrate how the hermeneutic works on the helix. This thesis concentrates on Kübler Ross's five stages of grief and although other grief models are referred to they are not developed in detail. Likewise, the helix model has been used as a starting point for understanding the commonalities and differences between aNE lament and contemporary grief, but other models could also bring new emphases. A comparison of *tav* motifs with aspects of grief on the helix as an additional study could bring more depth and breadth to our understanding of aNE lament in juxtaposition with grief and loss today. I am using transliteration of key Hebrew words, such as *'êkāh* to capture the poetic assonance and alliteration of repetitive cries such as 'ah', and metaphorical 'names' such as *'almānāh* to give the characters dynamism.

1.5.5 Summary of Thesis: Parts and Chapters

My research question re-stated is:

> How can Lamentations be read and interpreted cross-culturally, so that the reader stays with the structure of the text and the ancient ritual of lament, but also listens to the spontaneity of the cries of a bereft and humiliated people variously grappling with grief and the chaos of the situation?

On the one hand, I am seeking to resist abrupt closure of the textual experience of lament or the diversion from the expression of grief through a glossing over of vital issues, so that healing and restoration are not given adequate time and attention. On

[20] Rimmon Kenan posits 'we have learnt, that the patient repeats instead of remembering'. Since the repetition may take place without the subject being aware that it is repetition, the behaviour (non-verbal) then becomes the telling (verbal) of the grief experience.

the other hand, I wish to resist 'getting stuck' in the idealisation of the past, or the over pre-occupation with the present horror, which would also hinder movement towards recovery. I am proposing that the helix model is a critical aid to this process. This thesis deals with the question in three parts.

1.5.6 Part I Introduction: Theory and Method

So far in this first introductory chapter I have concentrated on the theory and method of this thesis. I have given a brief overview of the scholarship, setting, poetic structure and models of Lamentations and a résumé of the scholarship, studies, stages, tasks and experiences of grief. I have assessed various models that have been used by scholars from which I have developed a two-stranded helix with three 'Cross-strands', which will act as an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural model for reading the Lamentations text against the psychology of grief and for reading the psychology of grief back into the Lamentations text.

1.5.7 Part II Lamentations 1-5: Frameworks and Cries

Part II uses the helix as a model (Figure 4) with five motifs to demonstrate how the

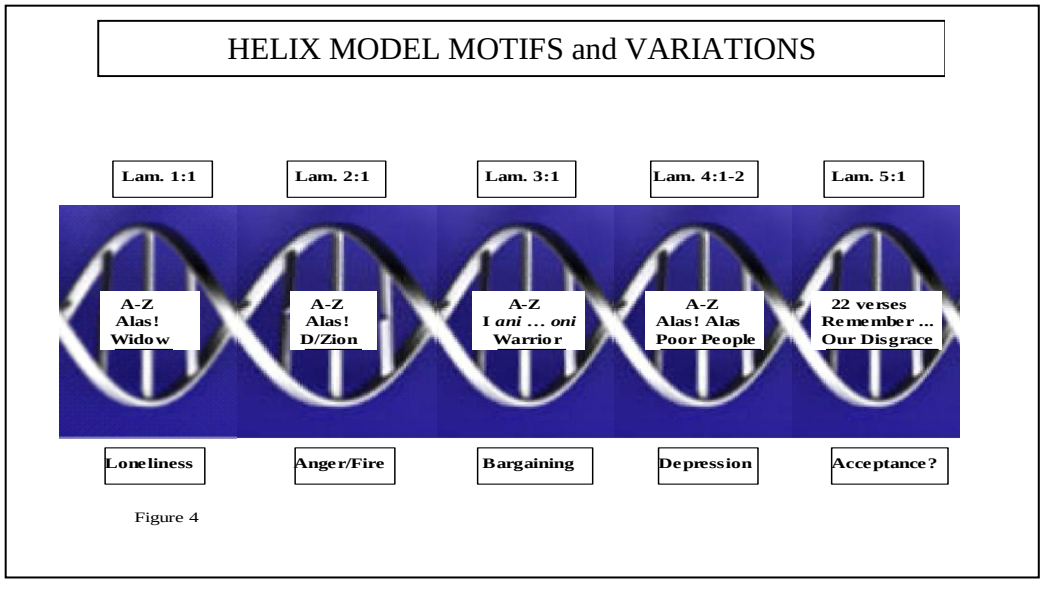


Figure 4

aNE Lamentations 1-5 form of acrostic lament reflects stages, tasks and aspects of psychological grief and loss today. Firstly, the cross-cultural usefulness of such frameworks on the first 'Cross-strand' on the helix will be explored in Chapter 2. Do these textual and psychological boundaries provide a 'safe or known environment', a 'magical' solution, a step-by-step procedure through trauma, or do they impose

restrictive limits? How could the various repetitive sequences of the *aleph* to *tav* of the Hebrew acrostics bring shape to our expressions of grief today? In juxtaposition, how could the spectrum of stages and tasks of grief (Table 2 p. 25) intensify the suffering or lead to a change process? Secondly, on the second 'Cross-strand' of the 'Helix Model Motifs and Variations' patterns of lament cries אֵיכָה (*'êkāh* Lam. 1:1, 2:1, 4:1, 2) עֲנִי … אֲנִי (*'ănî ... 'ŏnî* Lam. 3:1) and וּרְאֵה … הביט … זְכֹר (*zəḵōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh* Lam. 5:1) draw attention to the chaotic and turbulent emotional content of human grief. These and other cries in the Lamentations text are analysed in Chapter 3 to establish how appropriately these ancient cries of lament and grief are interpreted and heard today or whether they are ignored or even silenced. The focus on translating and reading the cries of the five Lamentations lyrics is linked cross-culturally with the importance of hearing and listening to human sighs, moans and psychological cries of: How long? Why me/us? When will it all end? What should I (we, they, God) do? Who is to blame in the suffering of our world today?

1.5.8 Part III Lamentations 1-5: Metaphorical Imagery and Grief Themes

In Part III (Chapters 4-8) various lament experiences of the *'almānāh*, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, *geber*, *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî* and *ḥerpāṯēnû* are compared and contrasted on the third 'Cross-strand' through the agility of metaphor to demonstrate various lament patterns and grief coping strategies. The multi-faceted and open-ended nature of metaphor gives credence and importance not only to all five lyrics, but also to a wider variety of expressions of grief. It is as if the grief stages of loneliness, anger, bargaining and depression, posited by Kübler-Ross, are voiced or silenced, actively experienced or passively avoided, through the behaviour of the Lamentations images of 'Widow', 'Daughter Zion', 'Warrior', 'Poor people' and 'Our Disgrace'. The importance of these images in the lamentation process is then examined to see whether there is a possibility that their protests, stances and actions resonate with human grief experiences today.

Chapter 4 opens with some definitions of simile, metaphor and metonymy and generalities for the five metaphorical images that will be the subject of the third 'Cross-strand' and the following five chapters (Figure 4 p.33). The focus then turns to the Lam. 1:1 and כְּאַלְמָנָה and how the simile of *'almānāh* (widow) in her stance and action becomes a symbol of loneliness, grief and isolation for individuals and

communities. In lyrical use of simile and metaphor her body cries out for comfort through her abject voice, her sighs, and her outstretched hand. Contrary to expectations, her friends and extended family do not support her and even her God no longer comforts her. She is isolated and set apart from her relationships and associations. This chapter asks how the *'almānāh* in the text, or the person in loss today, overcomes denial and acts out the loneliness and isolation of grief to survive prescriptive procedures and restrictive traditions.

Chapter 5 draws the reader into conflict between the dignity of social, religious and national identity and the anger and shame of physical disaster, where city buildings have collapsed and relationships have broken down. In Lam. 2:1 *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (Daughter Zion) questions whether anger, shame and rejection can be projected back on the ruling powers and in particular on *yhwh*? *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, whether symbolic of a country, land, city, community or individual, becomes a victim of anger, shame and guilt and acts out grief in the sacred space of acrostic and grief poetry. Through metaphor the physical space in the ruined city matches the emotional gap in her shattered experience of the settled life in community and becomes symbolic of the aftermath of disaster.

Chapter 6 offers readers a different approach, as it concentrates on the self-presentation in Lam. 3:1 of *geḇer*, the strong man. He personifies individuals and countries caught in the horrors of war, fighting against debilitating or fatal diseases and suffering the isolation of imprisonment. In his weakness and suffering his arsenal of weaponry now targets *him*. The suffering and wounded *geḇer* is like today's victims of disaster, disease or loss and employs bargaining (*Begründung*) as part of his lamentation and grief techniques in a counter-attack, which becomes a defence strategy. But is there vindication after all? Can God or others be motivated to act on his behalf?

Chapter 7 introduces a spectrum of vivid colours, but this immediately pales in the dust of death and loss of life and fades in the chaos of destruction as devaluation of assets sets in. There is a dramatic change from an ideal past to a wilderness setting and a struggle for survival. In Lam. 4:1-3 the stark imagery of the oppressed *bənê ṣiyyôn* (Sons of Zion) and depressed *baṯ-'ammî* (Daughter of my People) focus on the

struggle for life out of death. Clips of devastation show a wilderness filled with the symbolism of reversal. Jackals and ostriches inhabit the space now filled with the scattered stones of the city walls and walk over the destroyed temple buildings. Polluted priestly garments are a reminder of all that is left of political stability and religious security. The good life of prosperity, health and luxury, of purple robes, the gold standard and banquets of delicacies have been replaced by depression, oppression, devaluation, starvation and cannibalism.

In Chapter 8 through the imagery of in Lam. 5:1 the reader enters a picture gallery, which reveals as a group portraiture *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* (Our Disgrace) The auditory commentary sounds out the communal cry before *yhwh* in a kind of remembrance hymn or hopeful plea: 'Remember … Behold and see … !' This final lyric asks readers to decide whether the helix has become a dying trajectory as the text draws to a close, or a sudden revelation that leads to recovery, or whether it becomes a thickening framework, which supports an on-going search for meaning and significance between the text of Lamentations and grief experiences.

In Chapter 9, as critical readers retrace their steps across the lyrics, as they grasp at the traditions and rhythms of the 'Textual Strand' and cling on to the security of the 'Psychological Strand' of grief, the pathway ahead become less daunting. I propose this approach with the hope that in the exploration of the aNE survival experience in the Lamentations lyrics, strategies will be carried across time and culture and be woven into public discourse, poetic works and liturgical response to grief in our world today.

PART II - LAMENTATIONS 1-5

2. Textual and Psychological Frameworks

> Yet the internal structure of each day, its very monotony provided a framework within which my interior life could be set free to flourish. Una Kroll

2.1 First 'Cross-strand': Acrostic and Grief Frameworks

The assumption is that models such as frame and picture, dynamic circle, cyclone, spiral, gyre and helix, and frameworks such as the acrostic and stages of grief, 'suggest ways of understanding our being in the world' through retaining 'the tension of the "is and is not"' (McFague 1983:23). Models also help to get at the essence, which in this case is the expression of lament and grief, by stripping away extraneous details. As such the helix model will serve as a starting point from which to explore the tensions which arise from a variety of understandings about the purpose of the acrostic form and the appropriateness of stages of grief. This chapter will now focus on the first 'Cross-strand' of the helix to compare and contrast the acrostic frameworks of the Lamentations lyrics with the frameworks of stages, phases and tasks of grief (Figure 5).

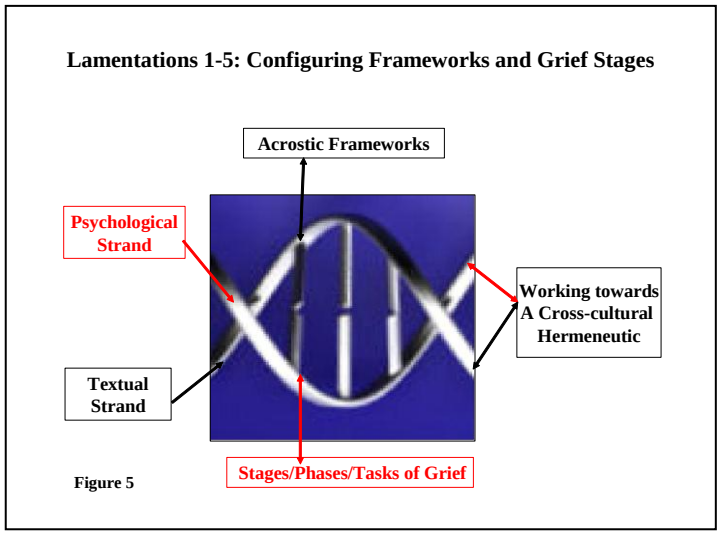


Figure 5

Scholars have shown interest in the acrostic composition of the Lamentations lyrics and Gottwald (1954: 23) notes that of all the acrostics in the Hebrew Bible 'it is incomparably the finest in its careful detail and subtlety of development'. Dobbs-

Allsopp (2002:18)[21] observes that 'the alphabetic acrostic was modelled most likely on the simple abecedaries that were a commonplace in scribal schools'. He adds, moreover, that the prominence of the alphabet in the poems 'reasserts the values of civilisation and culture in the aNE even in the face of utterly devastating and dehumanising suffering'. Many patterns and poetic devices seen in the Hebrew Bible are also apparent cross-culturally in other aNE literature, such as Mesopotamian (Gerstenberger 2001:486), Akkadian and Egyptian texts.

Vanhoozer (1990:56) suggests that 'in poetry as nowhere else we see the myriad ways that a limited number of signs - the 24 letters of the Roman alphabet to be exact - have been arranged to speak to and about the depths of human being'. My question is about how the pattern of the 22 letters of the acrostics and the rhythm of the Lamentations lyrics can translate into the language and patterns of grief.

The importance of the acrostic to the understanding of the Lamentations text has been the subject of scholarly debates. Proposals for an *aleph - tav* framework include the idea of a stylised thematic word or word complex, completeness, a magical formula, a memory aid, a liturgical form and a container or coping strategy. These suggestions will now be compared and contrasted with psychological aspects of grief on the first 'Cross-strand' on the helix.

2.1.1 Key Words

Eco (1984:42) maintains that key words are part of a stylised framework that leads the reader to symptoms or clues for interpretation. Key words such as *'êkāh*, which are part of the acrostic and yet stand out from the acrostic, which I am suggesting lead us to human cries of grief, are addressed in the next chapter. Worden (1983:96) suggests that it is not just a case of expressing the effect of the loss, but also experiencing the effect of the loss. Worden explains further by citing Van Der Hart (1988): 'sadness should be accompanied by awareness of what one has lost, anger needs to be properly and effectively targeted, guilt needs to be evaluated and resolved, and anxiety needs to be managed'. Repetition of metaphorical names such

[21] Dobbs-Allsopp also considers the acrostic as no less and no more significant than other poetic forms such as the sonnet, sestina, villanelle and rondeau.

as ‘widow’ (*’almānāh*), thematic words such as the word ‘all’ (*kol*),[22] which occurs 32 times in Lamentations, or repeated grief themes of loneliness, anger, bargaining, depression (see discussions in Chapters 4-7) may give the impression that ‘all’ angles have been covered in a universal sense.

2.1.2 Completeness

Gottwald (1954:32) argues for the holism of the alphabetic acrostic in the sense that Lamentations 1-4(5) offer ‘a form corresponding to the completeness of grief, responsibility and hope which [the author] wished to communicate’. Renkema, Assis and Middlemas propose a concentric shape to the Lamentations text, much as Westermann (1981:70) applies a complete cyclical pattern of ‘plea to praise’ to the Lament Psalms. However, the Lamentations lyrics differ from Lament Psalms in that they do not end with a vow of praise, but continue in an open-ended lament with a plea for mercy (Lam. 1:19-22, 2:19-22) in petitions against enemies (3:64-66) and in recognition of conflict (4:20-22). However, the completeness of grief is not actualised as the book ends on a sombre note of ambiguity (5:20-22). Moreover, the discipline of the stylised and completeness of the letter-by-letter commentaries is criticised by Rosenzweig (1994:40) as ‘soundless and dumb word’, because it is detached from human beings. He maintains that through the ‘dangerous power of technique’ in the spoken word, opera score or theatre script ‘the means becomes an end, the provisional becomes the permanent and the technical becomes a magic spell’.

2.1.3 Magical Formula

Gottwald (1987:541) and Westermann (1994:98-99) comment that the acrostic suggests a belief in a magical sequence of letters, which would go beyond the fiery turbulence of Jerusalem’s experience, to become a survival technique. Salters (1994:89) refers to Jeremias’ idea that ‘in ancient Babylonia the entire alphabet represented the cosmic circle, so it was thought to possess supernatural power’.[23] Could the pronouncement of the magical *aleph* to *tav* letters have powers to ward off

[22] *Kol* also links to a universalist theme in the acrostic Psalms 34 (x7) and 145 (x17).

[23] Salters explains further that the employment of an alphabetical sequence would lend power to poetic composition. Krieger proposes that it guarantees the cosmic order. But as Gottwald observes, there is no evidence whatever that the Israelites of this period held such beliefs, although they are to be found on the outskirts of medieval Judaism.

evil[24] as suggested by Bertholet (1949) and by the Medieval Kabbalah (in Gottwald 1954: 25), or in the sense of a mantra (Rhys-Jones 1979:66), whose recitation would overcome the external sounds and words and bring inner calm and peace?

2.1.4 Memory Aid

Archer (1999:82-3) suggests that in grief people have a strong urge to search for items worn by the deceased, or retain personal possessions and objects that were nearby when the death occurred. Archer explains further that in some cases such objects were invested with magic and symbolism. In the 18th and 19th centuries for example, mourning objects, such as jewellery and rings, would incorporate tiny strands of hair in memory of the deceased. Langer (1982:12) notes that 'survival draws its energy from the past, and is burdened by unforgettable memories that offer little relief to the individual' except that survival has taken place and 'living opens out into the future'. The acrostic may additionally serve as a mnemonic to recollect previous experiences, a way of liturgical remembrance, reminders of special days, or to recall occasions of rites of passage. During a time of turbulence and aggression the grieving observer will have a strong urge to search for meaningful objects, to collect memorabilia that bring back thoughts of past events and which are personal reminders, symbols of the social circle and the almost magically good times had together. Backer, Hannon and Russell (1982) have put forward two very different theories concerning grief. On the one hand it is an attempt to re-establish ties through continuously trying to find the lost object: a sort of yearning which can become very frustrating, according to Bowlby (1961:317-40). On the other hand it allows a break in the ties with the lost object as the person focuses on the deceased and tries to bring back memories. In bringing back these memories to consciousness and in looking at them the survivor severs the attachment to the deceased.[25]

The fourfold repetition of the acrostic could, therefore, serve as a memory aid whilst supposedly being an ostentatious display of artistic skill. However, as Segall (2008:190) points out, it is not 'a computer archive where the same information in the

[24] This raises the question as to whether the reciting of the Lamentations lyrics would prevent further catastrophe e.g. through a stylised lament to appease the deity. Furthermore, could a prayer-like mantra repeated often enough cause the deity to hear, have compassion and bring the needed aid and resolution?

[25] Backer et al. conclude that although the two theories posit different dynamics underlying the grief, the behavioural results of intense pain and an intense focus on the deceased may be similar.

same order is drawn every time', rather, it is a 'remembrance process by which sensory information is sorted out and evaluated in a very personal way'.[26]

2.1.5 Liturgical Form

Segall (2008:177-8) suggests that through the movement, pace and length of public commemorations, a measure of reassuring control can be offered, thus breaking through the 'helplessness of an experience of torture or severe oppression'. Archer (1999:69) maintains that the rituals of a funeral seem to serve an important function in countering denial and disbelief, particularly where circumstances of the death are unclear. The Jewish *Midrash Lamentations Rabbah* is cited by Assis (2007:712) as answering the question: 'why was the acrostic form used in Lamentations?' with 'so that it will be learnt by the chanters'. This response could be based on the assumption that the poems would be read at the ceremonies commemorating the destruction of the temple. Lamentations is still read on the Jewish Ninth of *Av* in memory of the exile and in the Christian Holy Week as a reminder of the crucifixion of Jesus.

2.1.6 Container or Coping Strategy

Occasions of religious ceremonies, milestones in the human life span and the yearly cycle of the seasons all have a notion of crossing invisible border-lines. In this meeting of time and eternity appropriate rites protect the biological growth of the individual and the group, especially at turning points such as birth, weaning, initiation, marriage and death. Aesthetically, it seems that the acrostic brings a focus or a limiting factor to a subject matter that could otherwise run out of control. Rosenzweig (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994: lxvi) helpfully suggests that what determines shape is 'the inner order of speech' and he identifies the 'inner order' with the movement of the mind in time from one state of energy to another. Soskice (2007:20) notes that tension occurs at the borders of the acrostic, as expressions of feelings refusing to be contained by traditional structures overflow the familiarity of literary structures and the expected dictates of social past experience.[27] Throughout the lyric the progression of acrostic enables the reader to stay with the *aleph* to *tav* of

[26] Segall analyses how the cultural performances of poetic laments and stories begin to work out traumatic experience for former guerrilla fighters, concentrating specifically on the Kurds in northern Iraq and the Xhosa in South Africa.

[27] Soskice adds that although Augustine carried out the arrangements for his mother's funeral without shedding a tear, he was 'torn to pieces' with grief in what he called 'a necessary part of the order we have to endure and are the lot of the human condition'.

a defined season of struggle, or a prescribed period of change, but at the same time in this containment of structure there is non-containable inner emotional turmoil.

The repetitive rhythm of the acrostic on the 'Textual Strand' and repetitive phases on the 'Psychological Strand' mimic each other causing integration rather than distantiation in respect of other individuals and communities across time and culture. My aim is to show that such recognised frameworks are helpful to engage the reader with the text and so experience various phases of grief, not only as an individual,[28] but also with others who are experiencing grief. Additionally, this approach has the distinctive ability to combine pattern, or alternatively dispense with pattern, according to the needs of the participant in the psychological and textual interplay of chaos and 'imposed' order.

2.2 Unity and Diversity of Acrostic Forms

Each of the five Lamentations lyrics has an alphabetic form, although the *aleph* to *tav* letters are absent in the fifth lyric. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:17) observes that 'the alphabet is nevertheless palpable, as the poem consists of precisely twenty-two couplets, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet'. In Lamentations 1 and 2 each stanza has three lines. The first word of the first line of the first stanza starts with *aleph*, the next stanza with *bêṯ* and so on until the twenty-second stanza with *tav*. The fourth lyric follows the same pattern but with only two lines to a stanza, whilst the third lyric has the most elaborate acrostic with three *aleph* lines to the first stanza, followed by three *bêṯ* lines and so on. In the Masoretic text the order of the letters in lyrics 2, 3 and 4 is different from the usual Hebrew order, since *pe* comes before '*ayin*. However, as Hilliers (1992)[29] suggests 'in Lamentations we have evidence of an authentic early Hebrew tradition of alphabetic order divergent from the Ugaritic and Phoenician order that became dominant'.

Other Biblical acrostics, which are complete or nearly complete acrostics, have a variety of forms and contents as follows:

[28] Over the next six chapters I will be developing five different metaphorical characters as they tell their story of grief and act out their lamentable state.
[29] Hilliers notes that 'the Greek of Proverbs 31 and Psalm 34 also seems to reflect this divergent order'.

Psalm 9/10 - a liturgical acrostic of thanksgiving and lament
Psalm 25 - individual lament and prayer for the nation
Psalm 34 - thanksgiving and instruction
Psalm 37 - wisdom
Psalm 111 - hymnic praise and wisdom instruction
Psalm 112 - wisdom and song of retribution
Psalm 119 - instruction in *ṭôrāh*
Psalm 145 - hymn of creation listing divine attributes.[30]
Proverbs 31:10-31 - the good wife
Sirach 51:13-30 - wisdom poem
Nahum 1:2-8 - chimerical acrostic, or hymn of theophany (De Vries 1996:478)

The acrostic patterns as seen above do not appear in laments or elegies in the Hebrew Bible except for Psalms 9-10 and 25. It is also important to note that the forms of the Lamentations lyrics differ from the Psalmic format of 'plea to praise'[31] as set out by Westermann (1981:170) and the Structure of Communal Lament posited by Albertz (2003:148) as: Address, Lament, Reference to God's earlier acts, Petition, Double wish and Vow of praise. Lamentations lyrics 1-4 do not address *yhwh*, but start with a human cry, the *aleph* of grief (*'êkāh* 1:1, 2:1, 4:1) and the self presentation (*'ănî ... 'ŏnî* 3:1), whilst the non-abecedarian Lamentations 5 calls on *yhwh* to 'Remember … Behold and see …!' (*zəkōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh* 5:1). These cries will be analysed in the next chapter.

This thesis is setting out to demonstrate that the words in the Lamentations acrostics are not like a magical spell. Neither are they soundless, nor dumb as they survive both translation and interpretation, but through metaphor they draw the reader alongside the grieving city and its inhabitants. Morla (2004:485) poignantly suggests that in the imperturbable passion of anger the Book of Lamentations 'draws on allegorical compassion, even the compassion of the reader'. Pyper (2001:55, 69) on the other hand, argues for an uncomfortable experience of reading Lamentations, since the lyrics 'may best be understood through their capacity to scandalize the reader into recognition of his or her own complicity with the psychology of destruction'. The lyrics offer us a variety of patterns, voices and images. Thus, this psychology of destruction (or survival) will continue to be examined on the first 'Cross-strand'.

[30] Marcus (1947:112-113) notes that each of the 22 acrostic lines begins with an adjective applied to God.
[31] See 2.5 and 3.4.1, 6.5.2.

2.3 Frameworks Overflowed

The individuals and city groups I have selected to develop through metaphor in chapters 4-8 appear in the opening stanza of the Lamentations lyrics and are named as *'almānāh* (1:1), *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (2:1), *geber* (3:1), *baṯ-'ammî* and *bənê ṣiyyôn* (4:1-2) and *ḥerpāṯēnû* (5:1). They cry out in grief and loss from within the borders of the *aleph* to *tav* acrostic. The frameworks and borders of family traditions, social cohesion and national security have broken down and the people are protesting and asking when the suffering and chaos will end. The unevenness of the 3 + 2 *qînâ* meter is juxtaposed with the repetition of key words within an acrostic totally focused on suffering and sorrow. At the same time this brings a comforting rhythm and a life-giving structure to an unformed city, which could mirror situations of floods, plague, war and illness today. Readers can thus choose to distance themselves or become engaged with this tradition of lament and process of grief, what Ricoeur (1984:70) calls the 'purgation of emotions'.

The acrostic is repeated five times in various formats, thus exaggerating different facets of grief experience. Such textual patterns provide a frame in which the turbulence of grief can be safely expressed. Watson (2005:198) explains that an acrostic is non-oral in character. It is, he continues, 'intended to appeal to the eye rather than the ear', so readers of the text are assured that 'by using every letter of the alphabet the poet was trying to ensure that the treatment of a particular topic was complete', that all (*kol*) aspects had been covered. The repeated process driven by the *aleph - tav* of the textual alphabet is conceptually somewhat like the flexibility but predictability of the helix model. The A-Z of lament and stages of grief become a framework of consonance within chaos and dissonance. In following this process on the model, although there are constant struggles with havoc and heated emotion, nevertheless, there is no pressure to escape into a lulled sense of security through false hope. The acrostic of each individual lyric will now be reflected on, starting with Lamentations 1 and the feelings of loneliness and isolation.

2.4 Lamentations 1: Patterns of Loneliness

Driver (1920:457) illustrates the character of reversal in the rhythm of Lam. 1:1 through his reading as follows:

> How doth the city sit solitary, - she that was full of people!
> She is become as a widow [*ke'almānāh*], - she that was great among nations:
> The princess among provinces, - she is become tributary.

The *'almānāh*'s A-Z quest becomes an all encompassing lament in a widow-city's experience of loneliness, as she has been abandoned by her husband and by God and isolated from the community. Freedman and Simon (1961:72) point out that in Lam. 1:1 the city is lamenting a state of social bereavement, because she has been 'widowed of both northern and southern communities'. According to Kübler-Ross the psychological experience of isolation is part of the first stage of five stages of grief. Weisman (1972:8) notes the negative aspects of death, which include not only separation and loneliness, but also defeat, humiliation, failure and injury and Parkes (1972:21) draws attention to the cost of commitment [in relationships].

Therefore, the poetic expression of *aleph* to *tav* in the twenty-two verses of Lamentations 1 could be a stylised technique which links words and themes. The acrostic assists the audience or committed readers to pay attention to the poem, especially when it is long, as in Psalm 119, or when the content is difficult, as in the Lamentations lyrics. Gottwald (1954:31) suggests that the sequence, continuity and rhythm in the Lamentations acrostics cause forward or backward movement through the repetition of patterns, symbols and key words. A slowing down of the first lyric occurs as the reader's interest is jarred, so that attention is paid to conflicting imagery produced by word pairs, such as city/widow, princess/tributary (Lam. 1:1) allies/foes (1:2) and settled/no rest (1:3). This causes a remembrance of the past, but then there is a jolt into the present through a realisation of what has happened. Then, as if in shock, a forward movement is generated again in the isolation of grief through the irregular rhythm of the *qînâ* (3 + 2) meter of lament instead of the more usual 3 + 3 meter verse. According to Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:19)[32] 'the tug of syntax as it carries over from the first line of the couplet to the second gives … energy and a palpable sense of forward movement'. Thus the poetic style continually provides a sense of flow and movement. Middlemas (2004:92) maintains that:

[32] Dobbs-Allsopp notes that enjambment affects over two-thirds of the couplets in the Lamentation poems and that the density of enjambed lines per poem moves from its highest mark in the first two poems to a noticeably decreased use of enjambment in Lamentations 3 and 4 and to its near absence in Lamentations 5.

> the alphabetic acrostic, far from constraining the concepts explored in the individual poems into an artificial form and thus jumbling ideas together in an uncoordinated way, indicates, instead a purposefulness in its composition.

Knox is drawn to ritual and ceremonial understanding of Lamentations and translates the Hebrew acrostics into English abecedaries. An extract from his translation of Lamentations 1 (KNO) shows the tension between the order of the acrostic and the chaos and devastation of suffering:

> 1:1 **A**lone she dwells,
> 1:2 **B**e sure she weeps; …
> 1:3 **C**ruel the suffering and the bondage of Judah's exile …
> 1:4 **D**esolate, the streets of Sion; …
> 1:5 **E**xultant, now, her invaders; …
> 1:6 **F**led is her beauty, the Sion that was once so fair; …
> 1:7 **G**rievous memories she holds … (Bold letters mine)

The first word 'Alone' is in contrast to 'dwells' as a settled social status and portrays the most agonising experience of the widow matching the emotions of loneliness, Kübler-Ross's first stage of grief. The widow is seen abandoned and isolated, reflected also in the mourning city's empty streets. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:37) suggests that 'grief is ritualised and thus made bearable' in the 'consoling ministry of language'. Perhaps surprisingly there is an imbalance of the lines of the acrostic-style text in the first four poems, where the second part of the line is disproportionately shorter than the first part. This reflects the chaotic form of grief expressed by Gottwald (1988:646) as a 'falling rhythm that is said to "limp", "choke" or "sob" in sympathy with the mournful contents'. By way of contrast, Parkes (1972:26) suggests that 'grief is not a set of symptoms, which start after loss and then gradually fade away. It involves a succession of clinical pictures, which blend into and replace one another'. This will become apparent over the next chapters in the movement along the arcs of the helix and as one arc or motif is succeeded by another following the hermeneutical model. Thus the *aleph* of the first acrostic, its cry *'êkāh* and the *'almānāh* image, is replaced by the second *aleph* and acrostic, its cry *'êkāh* and the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* image. Further acrostics and cries for the *geber* and the *bənê ṣiyyôn/ baṯ-*

ʿammî are followed by the twenty-two verses of the non-acrostic and the threefold cry of the *ḥerpāṯēnû*. The second Lamentation acrostic will now be examined.

2.5 Lamentations 2: Steps of Anger and Blame

A slight change in the *aleph* to *tav* sequence of the letters in the second lyric could represent a change of mood, or a sudden outburst of emotion. The second lyric acrostic form with three lines to each stanza is just like the first and third lyrics, but in Lamentations 2:16-17 and 3:46-51 and 4:16-17, *pe* precedes *ʿayin* instead of following it. Nancy Lee (2008:44) proposes that this inversion of letters is a strategy that presents 'dissident singers (and perhaps a dissident scribe/redactor)' who are rebelling against an order of justice and *yhwh*'s word. However, this order may be a traditional alternative which is also a way of configuring disorder enabling the reader to take another twenty-two steps using the support of a known sequence: maybe the sole soothing constant during surges of anger and times of shame. The acrostic, in its steady move ahead in time and space, nevertheless, raises psychological questions of anger and shame as the fire reduces the city to fragments. Encompassed by the carefully contrived order and sometimes interrupted flow of the strophes the model reader is ironically reminded of the chaos and turbulence that still exists. Out of a traditional cultural form of the text, which Gottwald (1954:24) suggests is like the 'quietistic vein of the Wisdom literature', the uncontrollable energy of a torrent of spontaneous emotion is displaced and bursts forth.

Inside the flattened city community structures have now broken down, the previous ruling party has disappeared altogether and religious practices are no longer there or have been horribly reversed (Lam. 2:1-9). A border of a patterned repetition of the alphabet (Lam. 2:1-22) is a traced outline, a cultural symbol, a reminder of the structure and power of an aNE culture, as it encloses the turmoil and surrounds the gaps now left in the wall-less, wasted city. The open space gives freedom to the reader and to the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* in the anguish of grief to search for and inspect one at a time, her ruined strongholds, her smashed gates and walls, her devastated palaces and invaded sanctuary. It is a reiteration that the order has changed and the organisation of the city has been torn down and destroyed. Landmarks (Deut. 19:14), graves (Gen. 23:1-20) and well-known boundary stones set up by previous generations to signal ownership of territory and veneration of ancestors, have been removed (cf. Job 24:2;

Prov. 22:8, 23:10). The centre of the city has disappeared; only a hollow shell remains.

Stavrakopoulou (2006) notes that 'archaeological and anthropological studies suggest that within traditional societies graves [which function as much for the living as for the dead] or other mortuary symbols, might serve to mark the boundary of a given place or to signal ownership of a territory'. This destruction in the life of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* spelled the end of everything that had made Israel and Judah what they were. 'Judah was exiled from its land' (2 Kgs. 25:21b) and loss of the land, the capital, the temple and the monarchy is aptly described by Albertz (2003:3) as 'a murky, gaping hole in the history of *yhwh* and his people, illuminated only briefly by isolated beams of light'. The second Lamentation acrostic becomes 'a semantic lacuna',[33] a term used by Aristotle and cited by Ricoeur (2003:21). This semantic lacuna, or textual/psychological container, becomes the physical space in the ruined city and the emotional gap in the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s shattered experience of the settled life in community expressed in cathartic fashion. The metaphorical city, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* as a female need not cause the reader's 'distanciation' from the text. 'Distanciation' as Hayward (1981:154) suggests, involves 'creating characters that audiences can neither identify with, nor mindlessly loathe'. Instead, her imagery challenges basic codes and conventions. In Ricoeur's (2003:21) words, through the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* the text is 'not closed in on itself but opens out onto other things'. Eco's (1984:49) interpretation is that there are new perspectives and performances as in a work of art, whether it is music, painting, story or poetry. Therefore, by understanding the tradition of the textual acrostic and facing up to psychological stages of grief on the helix model, there are possibilities that the Lamentations lyrics could result in a greater awareness of crossing social borders and religious barriers. However, for the city and its people the challenge of a new container, a semantic lacuna, could also mean a gap where nothing is happening.

In the second Lamentation acrostic life is on hold. The pulse of activity and business routines have stopped. In marked contrast, the *aleph* to *tav* rhythm continues slowly

[33] Aristotle points to one of metaphor's functions, which is to fill a semantic lacuna. The function of the metaphorical *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, which is to fill the gaps, will be developed in 3.3 and Chapter 5 until in Chapter 9 the reader continues to fill the holes left by the aNE Lamentations text and grief experience.

and automatically, but with some erratic interruptions. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* on the 'Textual Strand' and those who have survived disaster on the 'Psychological Strand' are visibly in step, as they continue to rhythmically 'limp' and 'choke' or 'sob' audibly in tune with the disturbed sequence of the acrostic or pattern of grief. They are too numb or shocked to think about the ironical role change from *yhwh* the warrior king who is merciful and protects his people, to *yhwh* the warrior who is in the role of enemy[34] of the nation:

> The Lord has destroyed without mercy
> all the dwellings of Jacob (Lam. 2:2a NRSV)

The poet uses enjambment again in Lam. 2:2a to interrupt the flow of the ordered acrostic and show that *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, emotionally held in suspense, has only a partial picture. Nevertheless, she is carried along by the poetic impetus of an incomplete line through unresolved conflict to Lam. 2:22a. It is a provisional or rash understanding, which requires careful interpretation throughout the lyric, before moving on into the tension of the poetic device, which Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:20) refers to as the 'orphaned line' and translates as:

> You invited as on a festival
> my enemies from all around

The festival builds up hope as for an occasion of celebration and happiness,[35] but expectations are dashed as enemies are invited to feast on *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, as through the heat of fire and anger her inhabitants are turned into sacrificial victims. The metamorphosis is made complete by the following line:

> on the day of the anger of the Lord
> no one escaped or survived (2:22b NRSV).

[34] *Yhwh* as enemy is irregular, like the change in the acrostic format, nevertheless accepted by the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* - see excursus on '*yhwh*/*'ādōnāy* as enemy' in Chapter 5.
[35] For further discussion of mourning and celebration symbols see Chapter 8.

Walters (1997:15, 40, 73)[36] notes similar distorted reactions in unresolved grief, such as excessive activity, alterations in relationships and extreme hostility towards people associated with death. Walters also suggests that for some people celebration is closer to their religious stance than grief. He explains that 'a celebration is easier to cope with than a funeral', so grief is suppressed as an inconsistent emotion and the existence of death is denied or dismissed merely as 'a passing on'. The rhythmic order of the lament acrostic could therefore be linked and overshadowed by the Psalter acrostics of thanksgiving (Ps. 9), praise (Ps. 34), wisdom (Ps. 37) and instruction (Ps. 119). Thus, in addition to the non-representation of the abecedarian border in translation, the content and rhythm of lament could also be misunderstood or lost sight of.

My concern is to stay with the Lamentations text and to continue to search for recovery despite the fray of dust and rubble in the once busy streets. In the devastation the serious reader will recognise the outline of the once influential elders, formerly an active part of the ruling community of *bat̲-ṣiyyôn*, now in the background, silenced and still. The ritual of temple worship is forcibly disrupted, as priests have exchanged their holy priestly garments of office for the mourning attire of sackcloth and the polluting association with the dead (Num. 9:6, 7; cf. Lk. 10:31). Instead of the anointing oil of joy they have a covering of the dust and ashes of death on their heads (Lam. 2:10), indicating their grief and loss (2 Sam. 15:30). Both text and citizen stay with the wilderness of the grief process, since it is neither time for re-building, nor repairing the city's ruins, nor is it the occasion for putting on garments of praise as a sign of deliverance in post-exilic acceptance.[37] Perhaps the regularity of the acrostic is an ironical reminder that aNE prophets or priests and contemporary ministers of religion can no longer take refuge in the automatic application of liturgical formality and doctrinal rigidity. However, they take their place in solidarity alongside the grieving *bat̲-ṣiyyôn* and by their behaviour allow deep sorrow to emerge so that the wound of suffering can start to heal. There is a striking coherent-incoherence as prophets and priests are no longer in active service. However, they identify with *bat̲-ṣiyyôn* in her grief - as if in their final oblation for the people they

[36] Walters looks at case studies drawn from Old and New Testaments, modern psychological theory and modern popular Christian literature on grief.
[37] See Isa. 61:3 and Chapter 8 for further discussion on recovery time.

have been slaughtered by *yhwh* in the sanctuary, or they themselves are offering their sacrificed bodies as they lie dead in the street.

The rhythm of the text is further established and emphasized through key words, what Buber and Rosenzweig (1994:xxxix) call *Leitwort-Stil*, and what Dryden (ed. Ker 1990:237) refers to as metaphrase,[38] where repetition of the same word produces an alliterative and an onomatopoeic sense of anguish in the text. Key words are well-recognised signposts along the way of grief, giving security in the inconsistencies of the crumbling city and the spoilt beauty of the natural order of things. The word *'êkāh* is selected for translation as an example of the signposting of lament and grief and will be the subject of discussion in the next chapter. The five lyrics are also punctuated by the word 'days' (*yôm*) mentioned nineteen times in all. On three of the eight occurrences of the phrase 'day of wrath' it is repeated at the beginning and at the end of the second Lamentation (Lam. 2:1, 21, 22) forming an envelope for the relationship of *yhwh* with *baṯ-ṣiyyôn.*

The acrostic framework also becomes an open way into the social heart and innermost turmoil of the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn,* as she represents both city and community in the text. Likewise, it is important to recognise that anger is a significant psychological stage or phase of grief, which emerges in the human experience. However, there are other issues to reflect upon.

Middlemas (2005:179) focuses on the population that remained in the homeland of 'templeless Judah', rather than those in exile and observes that 'more epithets for the city and the nation are found in the poems of Lamentations than anywhere elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible'. Such breadth gives fluidity of text, so that there is a way of constantly looking back to the time when the people were secure within the borders of the land of Israel. The rule of the king was in Zion, the priest was in office in the temple and prophets proclaimed a clear message. At the same time, there is the recognition of a reversal of circumstances, so that under new government the city's structure has changed. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is shamed into resignation to destruction, she is

[38] Buber and Rosenzweig coined the term *Leitwort-Stil* as a variation of Wagner's expression *Leitmotif*. It is a particular style of translation which is similar to Dryden's 'metaphrase' which is a rendering of the original text 'word by word' and 'line by line'as *Leitwort.*

marginalised in her suffering and she has lost her status to outsiders. This raises questions about monotheism and why Zion was not defended. Was it through *yhwh*'s negligence or his offensive activity (Broyles 1989:114-5)[39] that the people are still suffering in a situation? Can the people survive?

2.6 Lamentations 3: Intensified Forms of Bargaining

Assis (2007:22) sees Lamentations 3 as the turning point, which 'presents a change from despair to hope': following on from the 'aftermath of the destruction' in Lamentations 1, 'the actual destruction' in Lamentations 2 and a reversal to hope in the despair of Lamentations 4 and 5. Joyce (2001:531) says of this lyric: 'its importance is signalled by the intensification of the acrostic form', whilst Saebo (1993:295) adds that the elaborated Hebrew acrostic style seems to present the lyric, not only as the middle part of the book, but also as its central and most important one. The 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet in the third lyric are ordered as three lines for *aleph*, followed by three lines for *bêṯ*, and so forth, throughout the sixty-six verses. The alphabetically tight border is preserved; even the order reversal of *'ayin* and *pe* observed in Lamentations 2 is still maintained. This reversal of *'ayin* and *pe* in Lam. 2:16-17 is matched by the reversal of *'ayin* and *pe* in Lam. 3:46-48/49-51, but the mouthed violence of the enemies of the *geḇer* who 'shout abuse, their mouths full of derision, spitting invective' (3:46-48 *pe* stanzas MSG) mirrors, but is in sharp contrast to, the enemies of the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, who 'gape, slack-jawed, then rub their hands in glee' (2:16 *pe* stanza MSG).

The Lamentations 3 intensive acrostic form of three strophes for each letter has some similarities with Psalm 119. Crenshaw (2001:60) draws attention to the lack of modesty in the exaggerated pattern of eight strophes for each letter of the alphabet, where he suggests that the psalmist wastes time uttering tautologies, which become artificial and detract from the beauty of the poem. It is a pronounced didactic, even oppressive acrostic form, referred to by Ricoeur (1976:77) and Gottwald (1954:23) as

[39] Broyles suggests that in the laments in community in the Psalms, where there is victory by a foreign power, *yhwh* is sometimes given an active role and sometimes a passive role. In Psalm 48 *yhwh* is in an offensive role: he must defend his dwelling, whilst in Psalm 74 *yhwh* is depicted as negligent in relation to the destruction of the temple and in Psalm 79 there is only reference to *yhwh*'s anger, jealousy and fire.

'architectural grandeur'.[40] Grelot (2006:151) suggests that the search for God in Psalm 119 is further intensified by using the key words *dārāš* (to tread or follow, to worship cf. Lam. 3:25) and *bāqāš* (to search, enquire cf. Lam. 1:11). In response, the search draws the reader's attention repeatedly to the eight pillars of *yhwh*'s teaching of the *ṭôrāh*, expressed through words such as, precepts, commandments, statutes, ordinances, decrees, law and promise. Murphy (1975:120) suggests that the timely sayings of the sages also flow from experience and order into the chaotic events that make up human life. In summary, Psalm 119 in its strong wisdom pattern shows that through the observance of *ṭôrāh* from *aleph* to *tav* there can be communion with *yhwh*, who is the source and centre of this world's structures. Life can be lived in an orderly and satisfying way according to the will and purpose of God, although, as Marcus (1947:112-3) points out, Psalm 119 'is not so much a personal confession, as a sermon on the duties and rewards attending the Torah'. The ultimate goal of this concrete order and visual symmetry is to reinforce the importance of the dynamic structure and patterns of communication within the human community.

Lamentations 3 is less monolithic than Psalm 119 in its textual architecture, but strong warrior words are repeatedly shot out from a stockpile of weaponry. Like arrows and stones, they are aimed to hurt. The *geber*'s theme is also one of deed and consequence, yet there is seemingly a rebellion against the *aleph* to *tav* structure of the law. The *geber* in the battle between humans and animals (or is it between the *geber* and *yhwh*?) recounts hunting stories, such as the snaring and trapping (3:47) of wild animals as they lurk and hide (3:10). He encounters brutal ways of killing prey by crushing, mangling and shooting in the heart (3:11, 13, 34, 43). More than eighty specific words, that have not been used in the other four Lamentations lyrics, are introduced into the third lyric. Hilliers (1982:xvi) argues that human beings:

> live on best after calamity, not by utterly repressing their grief and shock, but by facing it, by measuring its dimensions, by finding some form of words to order and articulate their experience. Lamentations is so complete and honest and eloquent an expression of grief that even centuries after the events which inspired it, it is still able to provide those in mute despair with words to speak.

[40] Gottwald explains that Psalm 119 is the more architecturally imposing with its twenty two stanzas of eight lines each yet the much unrelieved severity of its form is oppressive and a single reading will disclose its didactic and gnomic character. In the composition of Lamentations with its torrent of emotion there is surprising coalescence of form and vitality.

However, Bible translators do not always represent the acrostic structure, which appears in the Hebrew text. In cases where the Hebrew alphabet is retained either in the Hebrew script, or transliterated as *aleph* to *tav*, its interpretation often has minimal impact cross-culturally. Knox, in his attempt to match the Hebrew alphabet, interprets the opening words of the three *aleph* stanzas in this third lyric as, '**A**h', '**A**sked' and '**A**lways' (Lam. 3:1-3). The third Lamentation acrostic uses key words, which show the way that the *geber* fights back through bargaining. Its cross-cultural significance will be examined in more detail in Chapter 6 through the imagery and grief expression of the *geber*. However, just simply cataloguing words in alphabetic sequence does not mean that all aspects of lament are automatically included. Nevertheless, it could still be used as a rough guide for what can be expected in the general mechanics of asking questions in the experience of grief. It is not necessarily all-inclusive, nor is it an indication that grief is experienced in the same way by everyone. As Green and Green (1992:124) observe:

> Grief is an intensely personal reaction but common elements are experienced in varying degrees by all bereaved relatives and are normal components of the process. Feelings of fear, helplessness, sadness, and longing, guilt, shame and anger may overwhelm the bereaved.

Segall (2008:179) in her concern with the cycles of violence notes that 'public laments incorporate complex emotions - alienation, anger, revenge, repressed silence, guilt, regret, conciliation, and even anxiety over horrific, invasive memories'. Grief is both public and personal, but there needs to be respect for religious and racial groupings and for the traditions, laws and practises, which come from different worldviews and which have impact on the configuration and refiguration process. Currer (2001) suggests that most studies concentrate upon the following, relatively common, range of experiences, which I have put into alphabetical sequence for ease of reference:

> Acceptance, anger, anxiety, apathy, appetite disturbances, bargaining, confusion, crying, denial, depression, despair, disorganisation, distress, doubt, dreams, fear, feelings of grief, forgetfulness, guilt, hallucinations, identity change, isolation, mourning, numbness, pain, pining, preoccupation, recovery, regression, reorganisation, restlessness, relief, sadness, sense of presence, shock, sleep disturbances, social withdrawal and yearning.

Currer (2001:1) also points out that 'in communities bereaved through a shared disaster, barriers are broken down as people relate as equals for the time following an occurrence'. The Hebrew poet in an aNE setting uses the well-known form of acrostic as a resource for the lament process in his community. In a similar way, but making this form more appropriate cross-culturally, I am using a helix as a conceptual model, using key words of grief on the various strands, which act as a guide through the turbulence of stages or aspects of grief. Neither the acrostic nor the helix nor stages of grief should be interpreted as rigid frameworks that follow only a linear or sequential pattern, which would ultimately become a barrier to emotional expression and ultimate recovery. Rather, the three dimensional model has a flexible open-ended frame. It gives a sense of containment and perspective on the one hand, but at the same time it allows the reader to transcend culturally-comfortable limits in the unpredictability of grief experiences.

2.6.1 Liturgical Use

The liturgical use of Lamentations in music and songs today tends to be selective in a way that is biased towards either a traditional interpretation or a celebratory theme, such that it does not represent the essential purpose of the depth of meaning of the Lamentation lyric. Lynch (1996:201) refers to the damaging effects of 'selective and destructive use of Biblical [or Talmudic or Quranic] passages to back arguments for a patriarchal, heterosexual or homophobic view'. One could also add non-lament, or celebratory views. The liturgical expression of hope, kindness and mercy, drawn from Lam. 3:21-25 in the following hymn used in Christian worship, can miss out the process of the cry of pain, the admission of defeat and the need for justice expressed in the other 61 verses in the lyric. Suppression could hinder the configuration process of grief to such an extent that the sufferer never actually faces the issues. The emphasis instead is on the hopeful orientation of the bargain and thus only represents the part of the acrostic which has a celebratory refrain such as:

> Great is Thy faithfulness!
> Great is Thy faithfulness!
> Morning by morning new mercies I see;
> All I have needed Thy hand hath provided,
> Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me! (Chisholm 1923)

There seems to be an incompatibility between what is traditionally believed, which is that God will provide, and the actual experience of grief, which is that God has not provided. The belief is that God in his providence will make things good. However, the actual experience is that there is still chaos and suffering. Weiser (1962:74-75, 82)[41] suggests that the knowing, professing and commemorating of *yhwh*'s providence expressed and summarised in classic formulations such as 'grace and faithfulness' is a 'cultic tradition', which is passed on from generation to generation. Stone (1999:25) posits that the specific usefulness of Lamentations is its emphatic declaration of the 'unacceptability of such suffering in an uncompromising fashion', thus calling into question any theological discourse that is 'willing to construct a comforting God, while refusing to confront the difficult question of evil'. In the *geber*'s situation there is seemingly unjust abandonment by *yhwh*, extreme suffering in apparently unnecessary war with 'the enemy' and inordinate personal conflict. The *geber* uses the acrostic structure as part of his arsenal, which forms a pattern to his battle plan. He plays for time using the discipline of moving forward step by step with implacable regularity along the acrostic, like a soldier on the march. In a similar way, a person in grief may use the bargaining stage to plead for the restoration of a sense of purpose and direction in a disorientated life. The *geber* and the reader belong to a greater army of wounded people, who in their dilemma have the courage to march out in protest and list their complaints. The *geber*'s counter-attack, his war of words and his reconnaissance are developed in Chapter 6.

The application of the repetitive acrostic in this thesis, therefore, is a way to give a form to an otherwise chaotic text of lament. In other words the aspects or stages of grief covered by the lament can be seen as a border, an outline or time frame, from which to work through one's own pattern of recovery. It is also somewhat like a spiral staircase, which has direction as one climbs up or down over and over again, using the handrail for support, but not being able to see round the corner. Hull's experience of blindness resonates with the need for orientation in grief. Hull (1990:77) suggests that a stairway is one of the safest places for a blind person, because 'there is never a stair missing from a stairway and all the stairs are the same

[41] Weiser explains further that Old Testament faith sees that in times of affliction the threat to humanity's whole existence comes from God and, conversely, realises that humanity's only chance of existence consists in life lived in communication with God.

height. There is almost always a handrail or at least a wall to touch'. Hull explains that in open spaces there is no structure and there is no way of telling where you are: it is unpredictable and could end at any moment. The limping *qînâ* 'dirge-like' structure of Lamentations, although it does not provide even steps in the acrostic, nevertheless does give orienting signals of the unevenness of grief. Askew (1992:27) in his meditations and poems demonstrates the ambiguity of a framework of rules and traditions:

> The walls I've made,
> and thought were good and comforting,
> now threaten me.
> … its not security I've found, but prison.

Such rigid conventions have not only supported and guided men and women, but also have engulfed and inhibited them through, for example, sexual prejudice, racial discrimination or religious bigotry. However, these traditions can be broken through. In the acrostic framework of the Lamentations lyric the *geber* clings to an epistemological assurance of rules established in the past, but appeals for the courage to take a route which will lead him through his struggles and give him a new way of life. As seen in these examples drawn from different settings and cultures, there is a human longing for order and the predictability in known patterns during the turbulence of change. From a psychological angle Benoliel (1970:265-6) proposes that Kübler-Ross's theory of stages of grief may be used as a guideline for listening to people's grief, like handrails on stairs, as will be demonstrated through examples in the following chapters.

Littlewood (1992:40, 42) suggests that 'grief simply does not follow any kind of ordered linear progression', rather it is better characterised in terms of 'wave after wave of violently contradictory emotional impulses'.[42] Stages of grief suggested by various psychological resources can also become inappropriate if applied in a slavishly sequential fashion. Although like the acrostic they give order and predictability, they could also preclude the freedom of alternating between the

[42] Littlewood expands the scope of the grieving process to cover a range of experiences such as shock, numbness, disbelief, anxiety, feeling unsafe, fear, sadness, despair, loneliness and confusion.

different expressions of emotion. A more holistic approach to grief acknowledges that stages do not necessarily follow a particular order, but can be a starting point from which to face up to grief. Nevertheless, exploring these techniques can become a flexible way to cope with grief in a variety of settings by focusing not only on moving ahead, but also on wounds and hurts.

2.6.2 Fighting for Survival at the Borders

The alphabetic border of the text is important, because as Derrida (1981:1-19) suggests, in order to approach (*aborder*) a text there must be some edge (*bord*) to it. Furthermore, as Linafelt (2000b:33) points out, survival takes place at the edge of the text, when a literary work overruns its borders, breaking through the dams that have been erected against it. The construct of Lamentations 3 focuses on the repetitive nature of the acrostic, the assonance of the Hebrew text and the strong imagery of the lyric. However, as will be demonstrated, the voice (Chapter 3) and action of the *ge<u>b</u>er* (Chapter 6) continually overflow the confines of the textual borders in a concern to fight back, despite the battle scars and defeat, when God and just-war seem incompatible.

The order, or frame of reference, which an acrostic brings to psychological struggles in a period of disorientation, is shared religiously and culturally with the liturgical theme and orientation of praise in the Hebrew Psalter. Ceresko (1990:223-4) suggests that the sayings from the sages flow from their experience and concern for order within the community, for the stability of nature and for humanity's experience of its regularity, daily and seasonally. The cycle experienced by the *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn* in Lamentations 2, which brought miscarriage, breach and death instead of life, is replaced in Lamentations 3 by the *ge<u>b</u>er*'s suffering of violence. The *ge<u>b</u>er* has endured assault in the place of the rhythmic sequence of daily guidance and suffers inner turbulence instead of the security of morning-prayer. Brueggemann (1984:10, 28) notes that 'the most foundational experience of orientation is the daily experience of *life's regularities*, which are experienced as reliable, equitable and generous'.[43] So, unlike the irregularities which pervade the *aleph* to *tav* style of Lamentations, the alphabetic acrostic of Psalm 145 is defined by the consistency of God's providence.

[43] Brueggemann utilises his 'scheme' of orientation-disorientation–re-orientation as a way of showing how the 'psalms of negativity' may be understood in the life of faith.

The song opens with a theological address: 'I will extol you my God and King … forever and ever', thus forming an *inclusio* or envelope, as it ends with 'My mouth will utter the praise of the Lord … forever and ever'. The epistemological expectation and implication is that there will be perpetual praise of God, who is King and the one who sustains creation. By comparison, Lamentations 3 opens with an emotional cry in a personal presentation of: 'I am the man who has known affliction' and closes with: 'pursue them in wrath and destroy them' (Lam. 3:1, 66). There is no mention of a just and powerful rule of a King in the text and the providential God seems to be ineffective, since he neither hears nor acts.

Brueggemann (1977:263) notes that the prayers of lament in the Psalter give a form to the worst experiences of life, thus following the movement innate to human suffering. The *geber* also seeks an essential theological and religious ordering by quoting well-understood wisdom literature and judicial language from royal, priestly and prophetic writings. Liturgical patterns of praise are noticeable in Lamentations 3:25, 26, 27, referring to the laws of God's creation as good (*ṭôb*) and everlasting. These features of goodness appear in hymns and songs of orientation in Psalms 34, 100 and 104. They also appear in the tight boundaries, not only of the *ṭôrāh* in the acrostic of Psalm 119, but also in the grief of personal laments in Psalms 86 and 109 and in response to the devastating settings of the prophets Jeremiah (33:11) and Nahum (1:7). God's character of faithfulness, which appears with regularity every morning, mentioned in Lamentations 3:23, occurs in Psalms 36, 40, 89 and 92 and probably refers to the established credo of Exodus 34:6-7 and the future restoration in Isaiah 49:7. Berger (1969:22) notes that human beings are 'congenitally compelled to impose a meaningful order upon reality'. The *geber* is marked by a lack of equilibrium, a sense of incoherence and unrelieved asymmetry. Therefore, just as Berger maintains that human beings possess a deeply rooted, even inborn, need for order and orientation, so the *geber* is seeking to organise an expression of meaning through well known formats and learned patterns. But what happens when the patterns are no longer there or are distorted?

2.7 Lamentations 4: A Spectrum of Change

The acrostic formats of Lamentations 1-3 have been discussed as guidelines or borders, but they can also be seen as a way of setting limits or boundaries, so that they

contribute to a feeling of safety and predictability in a dangerous and unsafe environment. This framework thus creates clear time and space within which strong feelings can be shared and contained, but always maintaining flexibility and space for negotiation. When a person or people group has suffered a loss, as the metaphorical *'almānāh*, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, *geber*, *bənê ṣiyyôn/ baṯ-'ammî* and *ḥerpāṯēnû* in Lamentations have done, Lendrum and Syme (1992:98) suggest that, 'they also suffer a distortion in their perception of time and space'. Furthermore, that 'the distortion varies in intensity from being merely unnerving for some people, to chaotic and frightening for others'.

These textual forms of lament and psychological patterns of grief may, therefore, become part of a coping strategy in dealing with trauma. In the fourth Lamentation the metaphorical *bənê ṣiyyôn*, or so-called 'precious children of Zion', the metaphorical *baṯ-'ammî*, so-called 'my poor people', are pictured as cruel and wild creatures. Left behind in Jerusalem in the aftermath of the destruction of the temple and the exile of 597 BCE, they are experiencing a period of depression, famine, social oppression, religious marginalisation and economic crisis. The chaos and turbulence in the content of the Lamentations text seems to lack a clear linear sequence or logical order in the vivid and violent expression of emotional outrage. However, as in the previous lyrics, the poet has imposed a sequence and order, which again creates tension with the turbulence of the content. Freedman (1986:417, 409) shows in his analysis of the metrical structure of acrostic poems that there is an 'overarching unity, structure and regularity with a considerable degree of freedom in varying from norms and departing from conventions,' thus there is 'a range of deviation and abnormality' in the acrostic. This allows the whole spectrum of emotional trauma to be explored from *aleph* to *tav* through different lament patterns.

The *aleph* and *bêṯ* stanzas in Lamentations 4 open with a double *'êkāh*, the grief cry of the *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-'ammî*. The sound continues metaphorically through the wilderness imagery of noisy jackals (4:3), the mourning cry of the ostrich (4:3), the begging of children (4:4) and the cry of 'unclean' from the prophets and priests (4:15). Throughout the acrostic, in the background of dramatic change to economic, social and religious depression, there is a noticeable juxtaposition of vivid colour versus black and white imagery. The poet paints a spectrum of colour and

immediately makes it dull and monochrome in a unique way across the A-Z of the poem. The potentially bold, bright pattern of energy, health, and wealth is immediately overshadowed by the colour-draining images of bloodshed, blindness, pits, and shadow. Gold has lost its lustre (4:1), the polish and sparkle of precious stones is sullied as they are spilled out onto the streets (4:1) like rubbish. Just as the abstract painter Rothko (Hess 2005:42) uses colour and a paradigm of three forms in his paintings to produce a dynamic experience between object and viewer, so the poet is drawing attention again to the people's depressed state. The unexpected overshadows convention, ceremonies have lost their value and the people have lost their positions in the cultural space. Rothko's forms act like windows or doors into a space of absence and silence, colour and texture and at the same time the figures become a mystical union of life and death, between the tragic and the cathartic. In a similar way Lamentations uses the acrostic form as a way in so that the reader's attention is drawn to the spectrum of colour in the text.

The acrostic formats of Lamentations 1-4 can also be seen as a way of setting limits or boundaries between text and reader, and reader and text, so that despite the emotional upheaval apparent in the content of the text, they contribute to a 'feeling of safety and predictability'. A framework thus creates what Lendrum and Syme (1992:98) refer to as: 'clear time and space within which strong feelings can be shared and contained', but at the same time always maintaining flexibility and space for negotiation. Backer (Backer et al. 1982:254-5) suggests that:

> during intense grief the bereaved will lapse into despair. They are disorganised. Apathy and aimlessness are two predominant feelings. There is a sense of futility and emptiness, and a loss of patterns of interaction. These feelings of despair may come and go as the bereaved start to reorganise their lives. As they take each step … the depression begins to lift until the final stage of reintegration occurs.

As the poet and the mourners move forward into the fifth Lamentations lyric, it is also possible that they can no longer sustain the acrostic form with its incumbent demands. Gerstenberger (2001:477, 505) suggests that 'the acrostic effect on the formal and generic molding of the texts should not be over-rated', he concludes:

> mourning is not meant to end in total despair. Rather it challenges the bereaved and oppressed ones to take a stand over against their own history, assume responsibilities over against God and the world, and count on God's forgiveness and help to be restored, to take up courage again and start anew a life in communion with God.

This change of pattern may still involve repetition or recursion (4.2.2, 5.3), but inevitably there will be a modification in liturgical response and psychological outlook and this will be tested in the final lyric.

2.8 Lamentations 5: Setting New Boundaries

The form of the fifth Lamentation changes slightly, although the 22 verses are retained, the *aleph* to *tav* of the acrostic disappears. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:140-141) points out also that 'the unbalanced and enjambed lines disappear giving way to the more usual balanced lines of Hebrew poetry with pervasive parallelism … signalling the sequence's impending conclusion'. He cites Hernstein Smith's argument in the problem of open-endedness and closure and the lack of a logical stopping point. Freedman (1986:423-425) and Rodd (2001:377) note the similarity of Lamentations 5 with the hymn form of liturgical praise of Psalm 33. The link is not only seen in the twenty-two verses of the psalm and the absence of the *aleph* to *tav* form, but also in the regularity of length and metre. Its lack of clear structure is reflected in the variation of the way it is set out, so that instruction, exhortation and beatitude mingle with the descriptions of God as creator and defender of his people.

Westermann (1994:213) notes the opening address is to God in the first part of the petition; asking *yhwh* 'to remember … to look and see' (5:1) the disgrace and loss of heritage, death of human beings, the parting with honour and the struggle to survive. In contrast, the second part is a petition of restoration: 'take us back … renew our days' (Lam. 5:21). This is juxtaposed with what could be seen as a rigid framework, which maintains the restrictions of communication between object and subject. It quenches creativity and change through denial, isolation, blame, fear and anger, preoccupation with the self-pity of *'êkāh* (1:1, 2:1, 4:1, 2) and the self-presentation of *'ănî … 'ŏnî* (3:1). Joyce (2001:532) observes affinities with Psalms 44, 74, and 79 since they are 'liturgies for times of national calamity'. Middlemas (2005:194) adds that 'the communal lament in Lamentations 5 provides a summary of the various

themes of the other poems', while Assis (2007:724) sees it as 'the goal of the first four poems' that 'as befits a prayer from the heart, it is not written as an acrostic'. This fifth poem prepares the reader for cessation (Hernstein Smith, 1968:34), as it 'constitutes the sequence's concluding movement' (Dobbs-Allsopp, 2002:140). With each verse having only one line in the prayer-like form of the fifth and last lament, Middlemas (2005:194) suggests, aptly, that 'the people are calling out in their last breath in a gasp that fades away under duress'. Morla (2004: 486) concludes that if self pity (*autocompasión*) is the motivating factor of the Lamentations lyrics, then the door to psychological growth and development will be closed: dangerous infantilism will result rather than healthy spiritual growth in whatever time and space we live.

Lamentations 5, in the absence of acrostic but continuation of the 22 verse structure, is perhaps an aid to moving on. According to Guest (2006:411), it is a time to think of setting new boundaries, limits and ground rules. Dislocation and dissonance in the broken trust of *yhwh* and his community is still being experienced, but protest has been registered. Stages of abandonment, anger, accusation and abuse have been worked through, so that healing and acceptance could begin here in the looser framework, where there is less tension between form and content, where the lyric is thus less formulaic and more spontaneous. Maybe at this point the helix model is also no longer required. Linafelt (2000b) discusses Lamentations in terms of survival literature, which is more about the vicissitudes of survival than the abstract of sin and guilt, more about protest as a religious posture than capitulation or confession and thus could be relevant to contemporary discourse on survival. Grief cannot be framed as such. It is far too complex in its emotions and activities. Although the lament is expressed in literary form and responded to in psychological patterns, nevertheless, it is a dynamic process, which overflows textual borders with emotion at any moment and defies liturgical frameworks, often unexpectedly. Thus, there is an onward step in suffering, where all is addressed to *yhwh*, which could indicate that there is some assurance of healing of rifts in relationships and confidence in understanding, as the aesthetic form changes and the poem comes to an end.

2.9 Conclusion

Human grief is an intensely personal reaction to a loss where one is left desolate, bereft, robbed or dispossessed. Green and Green (1992:124) suggest that common

elements such as feelings of fear, helplessness, sadness, longing, guilt, shame and anger are experienced in varying degrees by all, since they are normal components of the process.[44] The hermeneutical model has demonstrated a way of engaging with the Lamentations lyrics from a literary and a psychological standpoint. This technique allows the reader to be drawn in over and over again to explore aspects of grief in the confines of a limited and expected format. The frameworks not only provide a sense of protection and safety, but also, through repetition, slow down the process, giving time and space for response to the circumstances of disaster. As each lyric progresses from *aleph* to *tav* on the helix, the tension between the form and content is skilfully shown from new angles. The simple framework of the acrostic limits the experience of lament and confines the stage of grief, so that gradually healing and acceptance are made possible on the 'Psychological Strand', whilst meaning is given through the artifice and language of the 'Textual Strand'. The textual border of the lament and the framework of grief, therefore, form part of the survival strategy.

The acrostics and the stages of grief provide limiting boundaries, which cause reflection. Nevertheless, they allow an overflowing of any restrictions that may have been erected to prevent the expression of grief. Thus broken engagements can be faced in a cultural context within acceptable boundaries and time-scales. However, once there is acceptance and the framework has been removed, both the poet and the reader may experience a lasting change such that it becomes impossible to retrace one's steps in the same way over old ground. Perhaps going over and over old injuries in a kind of self-torture has worn thin and can now be stopped. However, the lament acrostic and the stages of grief will have served a dual purpose, not only to garrison the wall-less city, but also to give freedom of expression to the grief-stricken people.

Spence (1987:189) suggests that although human beings are pattern-seeking, nevertheless, a text which 'depends too strongly on rote repetition very quickly loses its explanatory force'. The A-Z pattern in the lyrics perhaps becomes too demanding

[44] Green and Green in their pastoral resources further explain that 'physical and mental symptoms are common and they may include tiredness and lethargy, the inability to think clearly, insomnia and bad dreams. Dizziness and palpitations, nausea and diarrhoea, headaches, menstrual disorders and loss of sexual appetite are frequent, alcohol intake may be significantly increased'. Some of these symptoms are noted in more detail in Chapter 8.

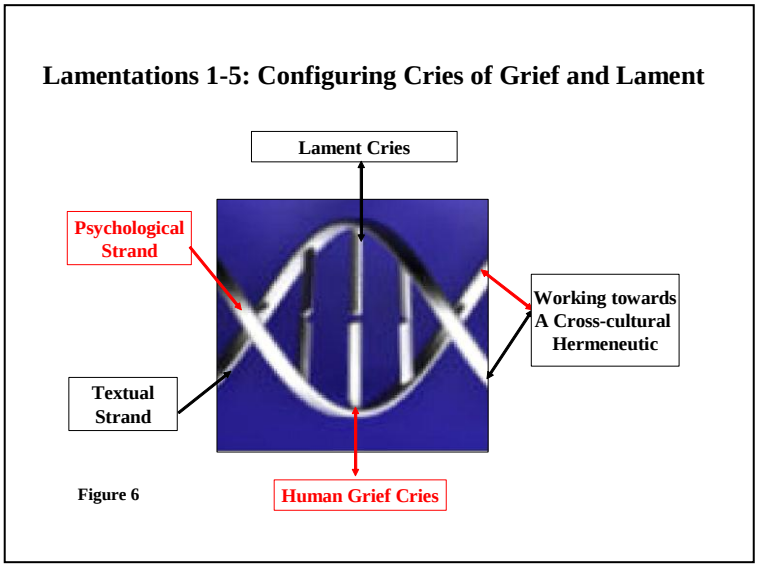
to sustain. After four attempts it seems somewhat mechanical, or too tightly controlled, whereas the non-alphabetic 22 verses become a healthy variation in this fifth attempt. Thus the alphabet has formed a basis for reading and the stages have become a basis for recovery, but the hermeneutical diversity moves the reader on to the second 'Cross-strand' of the Helix Model Motifs to analyse how the lament cries of the five Lamentation lyrics are translated and interpreted in the patterns and spontaneity of human grief cries.

3. Cries in Lamentations and Human Grief

> Sensitive lyrical poets always could hear these significant sounds of life and describe them in words. B. Balasz

3.1 Second 'Cross-strand': Lament and Grief Cries

So far, this thesis has been engaged in exploring the textual boundaries of the *aleph* to *tav* acrostics of the Lamentations text, in which the unity and diversity of stages and tasks and aspects of psychological grief are experienced. This chapter will focus on the second 'Cross-strand' on the helix model (Figure 6) to demonstrate how there can be an audible break in these frameworks as new boundaries are indicated, whether by a change of tempo, a cry, or a breathy anacrusis, or even through the space for silence.



Hebrew lament cries of *'êkāh* (Lam. 1:1, 2:1, 4:1, 2), *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* (Lam. 3:1) *zə<u>k</u>ōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh* (Lam. 5:1) appear in the opening stanzas of the five Lamentations lyrics, as if to set the scene of the lyric and to create initial emotional impact on the readers/listeners and to warn them to pay attention to something significant that has happened, or is about to happen.

Could readers profit from more than a naïve reading of the seemingly closed nature of the acrostic/grief structures? In the last four decades there has been an explosion of different Bible translations and paraphrases bringing an ease of composition, while still aiming to maintain the style and ideas of the original work. Multi-media forms of film, audio transmitters, and the internet have all helped to develop and widen

contemporary approaches to the understanding and interpretation of the Biblical text in a global context. A careful translation and a more critical reading, with reference to the helix model, could turn the framework of a stereotyped or closed situation[45] into a more open situation where repetition becomes a rhythm for grief and keywords become signposts, which offer a series of interpretative choices and reader empathy.

Form-critical analysis undertaken by Meek (1980:3), C.W. Miller (2002:12 citing Gunkel 1929 and Jahnow 1923) and Nancy Lee (2002) suggests that the opening wail of *'êkāh* in Lamentations 1, 2, and 4 is typical of aNE dirges, mourning songs and lamentations. Lamentations 3 opens with the phrase: 'I am the man who has known affliction' (*'ănî ... 'ŏnî*) prompting the form-critical reader to think of an 'individual complaint'.[46] On the other hand, Lamentations 5 is a 'communal complaint',[47] as it breaks out into a threefold petition to *yhwh* to 'Remember … Behold and see!' (*zəkōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh*).

Mills (2003:4) contests this analysis from the perspective of literary and cultural criticism, because, as she explains, 'the symbiosis of readers and ancient inherited texts influences cultures'. Rather than being framed as dirges,[48] or limited to ancient liturgical cries,[49] a plurality of meanings can be offered. Critical readers and the text are thus interactive, not only in the 'Lament Cries' on the 'Textual Strand', but also in the 'Human Grief Cries' on the 'Psychological Strand' as in the model (Figure 6 p.66). Can this interactive interpretation on the second 'Cross-strand', what Mills (2003:5) calls 'thick stranded language', bring new insights from other disciplines, eras and cultures that will benefit not only those who are experiencing disaster and loss, but also those in a pastoral role, who metaphorically sit alongside those who are in mourning?

---

[45] See Eco (1984:20) and his suggestion that closed texts 'aim at pulling the reader along a pre-determined path, carefully displaying their effects so as to arouse pity or fear, excitement or depression at the due place and at the right moment'. Open texts, according to Eco (1984:65, 51), 'set in motion a new cycle of relations between the artist and his audience', but requires the reader to hunt and find the interpretative possibilities.

[46] See also Pss. 3-7; Jer. 15:10-21; 20:7-18; Job 9:25-10:22; 30:9-31; Sir. 18:8-14; 22:27-23:6; Pss. Sol. 5:2-8; 16:6-15.

[47] See also Pss. 44, 74, 89; Hos. 6:1-3; Joel 1:18-20; Isa. 59:9-15; 63:7-64:11; Jer.14:7-22.

[48] Bergant (2002:7) notes that the exclamation *'êkāh* linked to a third person speaker and reversal of fortunes are features of the dirge.

[49] Watson (2005:222) notes that in the study of sound patterns [such as in the cries of lament] it is important to bear in mind that there is no such thing as *the* pronunciation of Hebrew as it would have developed and evolved over the centuries and some language variations still remain.

'Êkāh, the first word of the book gives the ancient text its name, but Lamentations is also referred to as *qînâ* because of the 3 + 2 uneven lament-style meter. According to Moberly (1997:866) conflicts arise in contexts of death or disaster, since if cries are specified in the form of an elegy and the term *qînâ* is used, either they are addressed to the departed[50] or to bystanders,[51] but never addressed to God. In opposition, cries that are expressed in times of trouble, such as in the lament psalms,[52] are addressed directly to God. Bailey (2008:157) suggests that although Biblical scholars tend to distinguish sharply between the lament genre and the dirge genre, nevertheless:

> the distinction is not as clear in cultures that do not understand death to be the end of the existence of a person or that may use funerals to be the end of the existence of a person or that may use funerals to express grief over other losses because it is acceptable to mourn at funerals.

The word *'êkāh*[53] occurs 75 times in various forms in the Hebrew Bible. Sometimes it occurs in what are clear occasions of mourning, such as in the case of David lamenting over the death of Saul, and Jonathan's cry: 'How (*āk* the shortened form of *êkāh*) are the mighty fallen!' (2 Sam. 1:19), or as a lament to emphasise the sounds of Rachel weeping over her children (Jer. 31:15). The ritual lament for the deceased is conducted soon after the person's death or after hearing the news of that death e.g. Samuel (1 Sam. 25:1). As a rule, the lament takes place in the presence of the corpse[54] and immediately before interment, as in the case of Abraham weeping for Sarah in Hebron (Gen 23:2). Such lament rituals belong to important religious and social customs of the ancient world, but the scroll *'êkāh* is still read at the Jewish Ninth of *Av* in memory of the disastrous times of the exile. Verses of Lamentations form part of the lectionary for Holy Week in the Christian calendar, when Christians remember the suffering and cry

[50] e.g. Jonathan 2 Sam. 1:26; Abner 2 Sam. 3:31-35; Tyre Ezek. 27:32-36 .
[51] The bystanders could be actual or imagined as in the mountains of Gilboa and the daughters of Jerusalem in 2 Sam. 1:21, 24.
[52] e.g. Pss. 42, 44, 55, 74, 88 and 89.
[53] '*Êkāh* also occurs in Deut. 1:12, 12:30; SOS 1:7. According to Waltke and O'Connor (1990:328-9) it can have *either* an exclamatory *or* an interrogative sense through the interpretation of the adverbial meanings of 'how', 'where', 'whence' or 'whither'. Clines (1993:209) suggests that as an interjection it can mean 'How terribly!' expressing the enormity of the catastrophe.
[54] Worden (1983:118-120) suggests that the funeral service as a ritual, if done well, can provide an opportunity for individuals and the community to express thoughts and feelings, although maybe it has the drawback of happening very soon after the death, and therefore the immediate family members could be in a dazed or numb condition. Nevertheless, seeing the body of the deceased person helps to bring home the reality and finality of death, whether one has a wake, an open casket, or a closed casket.

of Jesus at his crucifixion and the weeping of the women at his tomb. There are also examples of lament rituals today such as among the Créole people[55] in Réunion Island, where as part of the bereavement process, family mourners sit round the open coffin talking to each other and looking at the body of the deceased. When the coffin lid is nailed down, the weeping and wailing becomes very loud and continues as family and friends follow the coffin to the funeral service and burial ceremony. Although there is no question of simply reproducing the patterns and cries of the aNE practices of lament and mourning in our world today, Moberly suggests (1997:874) that maybe 'some practical wisdom has been lost and needs to be regained'.

The Tanakh Bible translates *'êkāh* with the somewhat archaic interjection of lamentation: 'Alas'[56] and the Message version with 'Oh, oh, oh' as an expression of pain. The Knox Version translates the three Hebrew *aleph* stanzas of *'êkāh* with words starting with the corresponding English letter 'A', thus: '**A**lone' (Lam. 1:1), '**A**las' (Lam. 2:1) and '**A**ll' (Lam. 4:1) become the suffering cries of the metaphorical city. Bail (2003) asks the question 'when does a cry become a text?' and notes the difficulty of translation cross-culturally:

> *'êkāh* is a call to lament, a cry of despair, the sound which rises into the throat in the midst of horror and grief. It can hardly be reproduced in another language: translations such as *alas*! *woe*! *O woe*! sound banal and meaningless. It is a cry of alarm which has been put into letters to fix it – in the whole breadth of its meaning.

The Contemporary English Version has omitted a translation of *êkāh* maybe because the English equivalent 'Alas' is too archaic and therefore not appropriate, or because the adverbial 'How' has little meaning in contemporary mourning rituals and grief patterns, or simply because it cannot be rendered appropriately in the reader's language.[57] But should these lament and grief cries be omitted? Do they belong only

[55] This mourning ritual was observed as I was invited to join a family as they buried their 7 year old son, during my work in Réunion Island 1991-5.

[56] The word 'alas' is absent from Longman's 1987 version of *Roget's Thesaurus*. The older 1979 version, however, gives the synonym of 'alas' as 'lamentation': an expression of pain and suggests a string of interjections including: 'O dear!' or 'ah me!' or 'alas!' or 'alack!' or 'alas the day!' Therefore, to translate is not merely a question of rewording.

[57] The model is flexible and allows the reader to join at any point. If the *'êkāh* of grief is not appropriate, silence can be kept. Parkes, Launguni and Young (1997:218-219) conclude that this is

to ancient times or should they become an integral part of current coping strategies for grief today? Westermann (1994:93) explains in his interpretation, that it may be considered improper to utter *'êkāh* as a pre-cursor to the understood statement of 'How could you, God, allow this to happen?' This kind of accusation, which formed part of the framework of an aNE lament, may seem to be negative or irreverent in our contemporary world and therefore the expectation is that one should keep quiet about it. In turn it may well result in the denial of God's presence and power both publicly and privately, or simply an inability to pray. Emotional absence may also be reflected in the numbness and shock of a psychological state of grief so that loneliness, anger bargaining or depression cannot be admitted before God and before the community. Then the person in grief is likely to slip into denial[58] of the effects of the disaster situation.

The third and fifth Lamentations do not open with the cry of *'êkāh*: its absence could mean that the expression of grief is interpreted textually and psychologically through silence, or because suffering and pain are beyond words, or even that one is in denial. Alternatively, other verbal expressions and key words could be used, such as the more powerful, authoritative self-presentation of *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* in Lamentations 3:1, which is also a cry of protest in suffering and hurt, expanded to the phrase: 'I am the man that has known affliction' (TAN). The Chouraqui version[59] emphasises strong emotional involvement up front by beginning with an additional emphatic personal pronoun '*moi*' to reinforce the '*je*', so it reads '*Moi, le brave, j'ai vu l'humiliation*'. Knox interprets the cry in Lamentations 3:1 with the interjection '**A**h' in his translation, '**A**h, what straits have I not known, …!'

The cries of *'êkāh* and *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* (Lam. 1-4) lead to the threefold cry of *zə<u>k</u>ōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh* (Lam. 5:1), a traditional cry to God in prayer to 'Remember, … Behold and see' the disaster and human affliction. These cries echo throughout the lyrics by means of key words and sounds of mourning and moaning (*ta'ăniyyāh wa'ăniyyāh* Lam. 2:5), tears (*<u>d</u>im'āh* Lam. 1:2, 16; 2:11, 18, 19, 3:48) and sighs (*ĕnāḥîm* Lam.

---

often the case in cultures where 'the free expression of emotions, although not expressly discouraged, is by no means encouraged'.

[58] As posited by Kübler-Ross, Bowlby, Bowman, and Clark see Table 2 (p.25).

[59] Chouraqui was born in Algeria (1917). He studied law and rabbinical studies in Paris (1935) and became advisor to Ben Gurion (1959-63).

1:4, 8, 11, 21, 22). Intense and unending sobs sound out repeatedly in the night (*wālaylāh … ballaylāh* Lam. 2:18, 19), appearing like phonological refrains of lament in the emotional experience of loss and grief in the family, extended family and community. This next section will develop the translation of *'êkāh* in Lam. 1:1 as 'Alas!', 'How!', 'Alone!' and 'Oh, oh, oh' as it resonates with grief cries on the second 'Cross-strand' on the helix.

3.2 Lamentations 1: *'êkāh* a Lonely Cry

According to the acrostic pattern Lamentations opens with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet *aleph* and the word *'êkāh*, which introduces the city, sitting like a lonely widow (כְּאַלְמָנָה) abandoned by her husband and isolated from her community in her grief. The word is the opening gasp or cry of suffering, characteristic of the dirge in Hebrew texts. Perhaps emphasising the sitting apart of the 'widow' (*'almānāh*) the cry of *'êkāh* is on a separate line from the rhythm of the first stanza in the Tanakh text,[60] possibly to give time and space for the reader to hear, internalise and respond in outward expression of the inner turmoil of grief.

3.2.1 Death Rites and Sung Laments

Peter Martyr Vermigli[61] in his 16th century commentary on Lamentations (Shute 2002:11) emphasises a clear emotional engagement at the start of the lament/grief process through *'êkāh* as the first word of the lyric. *'êkāh* as an adverb can be in the interrogative: 'in what manner?' or an exclamation: 'how!' in the sense of the degree of abandonment or loneliness. The startling word 'How' at the very beginning of Lam. 1:1: 'How does she sit alone, a city full of people?' gives initial emotional impact and is more emphatic than the statement: 'she sits alone, a city full of people'. Peter Martyr (Shute 2002:11) suggests that 'an adverb that begins a sentence has considerable force to express excitement'.

---

[60] Bail (2003) explains that the Masoretic text of the Biblia Hebraic Stuttgartensia *'êkāh* is separated from the text which follows because of the separating accent Legarmeh which the Masoretes placed after the word *'êkāh*. 'Legarmeh is made up of a linking character (Mûnah) and a separating character (*paseq*) so it divides and combines at one and the same time'. The Tanakh version places 'Alas!' on a separate line.

[61] Shute explains that Peter Martyr in 1542, a refugee from Catholic Italy, lectured in Hebrew, teaching first the Minor Prophets, then Lamentations. Martyr moved consciously away from the fanciful, often allegorical, exegesis of the Middle Ages and toward the newer, more philological methods of interpretation developed by the Renaissance humanists, that is, he sought the most correct text available and its original meaning.

The Tanakh version translates the four textual occurrences of the Hebrew *'êkāh* by 'Alas!' an interjection with tragic overtones. However, the King James Version uses 'How!' as an adverbial device of manner, seven times in all,[62] perhaps to give a sense of the spiralling force of feelings of grief or as Pham (1999:58) suggests: as 'an exclamation of grief at the striking change from the glorious past to the present state of humiliation'. In Lamentations 1:1 the sense of the emotional impact on the status change of a widow-city escalates from the first 'How!' and the downbeat emptiness of a once prestigious community through to the second 'How!' of widow-like feelings of abandonment. The third 'How!' culminates in experiences of exclusion and powerlessness, as both widow and city become subservient to other authorities for financial and social survival.

The cry of the lonely widow-city sitting apart in the isolation of bereavement links the Jerusalem community with death rites and ceremonies through the imagery of *'almānāh*. The gasped *'êkāh*, a death wail, suggests situations of reversal, where there are strong emotions, a depth of loneliness, which needs to be worked through in the pain of lost relationships. Throughout the time of the patriarchs, monarchy, prophets and wisdom teachings in the historical background of the Jerusalem community, *'êkāh* was a lament cry which occurred especially during troubled times in the Hebrew Bible.[63] Kaiser (1987:182) notes that Zion/Woman 'screams her invective against *yhwh*' and Guest (1999:434) adds that 'in owning her pain, her bitterness, her betrayal, she reclaims some dignity at least'. Westermann (1981:170) suggests that it is probable that the Lamentations lyrics, which he calls *Klagelieder,* were sung over the site of the destroyed temple, as indicated by the German suffix *Lieder*, meaning songs. *Klage,* he explains, means Lamentations and broadly includes dirges or elegies. *Klage* can also be laments, which arise from distress, such as in war, illness, or loss. In the case of the death of Josiah (2 Chron. 35:24b-25) it is not clear whether laments were sung or said:

[62] How! appears three extra times (KJV Lam. 1:1 x2 and Lam. 4:1 x1).

[63] Examples of variations of *'êkāh* occur in troubled relationships such as the account of Rebekah as Isaac's sister (Gen. 26:9), the encounter of Joseph with Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:9) with Benjamin (Gen. 44:8) and with Judah (Gen. 44:34) as well as in mourning for kings, such as Samuel for Saul (1 Sam. 16:1) and David for Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:19, 25, 27). Opposing forces are seen in wisdom literature, such as where Job gasps and distances himself from the 'empty consolation' offered to him (Job 21:34). *Qoheleth* mourns that the wise man dies just like the fool (Eccl. 2:16).

> Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah which all the singers, male and female, recited in their laments for Josiah, as is done to this day; they became customary in Israel and were incorporated into the laments.

Gottwald (1954:33) refers to the funeral song of Lamentations as: 'necessarily sung after the event, but it is national'. Westermann (1994:87) suggests that 'the "book" of Lamentations … is a collection of separate songs or poems'. Extracts from Lamentations are still sung or read today during religious festivals, such as Jewish Ninth of *Av* and Christian Easter, as a seasonal and serious reminder of broken engagements, loneliness, death, and empty cities. As O'Connor (2002), Mandolfo (2008) and Nancy Lee (2010) show, and as this thesis will illustrate, other poems have been written, either based on the format of the Lamentations lyrics (e.g. Fant on New Orleans 2008), or which resonate with the lyrics (e.g. Arapovic on Croatia 2008), and have been helpful in expressing grief in disastrous situations of floods, war, disease, and death today.

In Thomas Tallis' musical version of Lamentations 1:1-2, which in the Christian community is usually sung during Holy Week, *aleph* is sung in an embellished way, known as *melisma*, when several notes are sung on one syllable.[64] The *ah* of *aleph* is decorated in music in the same way as the first letter of a medieval manuscript is illuminated in bright colours. The one syllable *ah* of *aleph*, which is sung to a melodic sequence of several notes by a group of choristers, tunes in with the *ah* of *'êkāh*: a repetitive sound, which becomes the wailing lament, in a tearful falling phrase, of the mourner or group of mourners. In this way, the musical arrangement obtains what Lakoff and Johnson (1980:127) suggest is 'more', in both form and content.[65] So the *aleph* of Lamentation in the acrostic form is perpetuated by means of the reiteration of the wailing cry *ah* in the content.

[64]Defined by Humphries in a presentation of 'Lamentations and Music' in Chester Cathedral 3rd May 2006. Brett (1995) notes that Tallis set to music, not only the Biblical text, but also the announcements and the Hebrew letters, which separate the verses and the refrain.

[65] Lakoff and Johnson give an English example of more of form is more of content iteration: 'he ran and ran and ran', which indicates more running than 'he ran'. 'He is bi-i-i-i-ig' indicates that he is bigger than if you say 'he is big'. Similarly, 'he is very, very, very tall' indicates that he is taller than 'he is very tall'.

Holzman (1997:133)[66] recognises close analogies to speech and sentence found in music. A melody is a sentence, since it is composed of musical phrases, which have notes in a particular order, like words in a sentence composed of a noun phrase or verb phrase. Whether in music or recitation, Lamentations is a string of words, which verbalise and act out complaint, thus giving needed expression to the human story of life, death and survival. So the translation and interpretation of *'êkāh* can be interpreted by grief cries in other languages.

Bailey (2008:160) in her review of Lament traditions, cross references Biblical 'moans' or 'moaning' (e.g. Isa. 29:2, 38:14; 59:11; Pss. 55:18, 77:4) with the moaning and groaning traditions of enslaved Africans. In some circumstances it can be very difficult to articulate pain. 'These moans of the African American tradition were not like sighs', according to Bailey, 'they were prolonged sounds … sometimes they had words attached, sometimes not'. Bailey explains that 'the wordless song of lament, the moan, is a way of expressing that pain … while maintaining one's privacy and dignity, particularly in a context of vulnerability and hostility'.

3.2.2 Human Breath in Life and at Death

I am therefore arguing that through phonology, sung dirges, verbal repetition, key words, religious rites and communal rituals, the *'êkāh* and the halting, sobbing, limping feeling of *qînâ* of the ancient Near Eastern *'almānāh* can become the reader's expression of lament and grief. It can be a quiet gasp of shock, a sigh, or a loud cry for help. Worden (1983:290) and Littlewood (1992:41) observe that deep sighing is frequent among the bereaved and is linked to physical sensations, such as hollowness or tightness of the chest and breathlessness. It could also be symbolic as De Lange (2000:115) claims: 'according to classical halakhic sources, the cessation of breathing marks the moment of death'. The idea of breath could also have links to other sacred texts such as the *Qur'an*, as breath or soul forms part of the idea of life and death, in a setting of destruction and terror in 'The Terror':

[66] Holzman in her chapter on 'The linguistic system and early language development in children' looks at the linear organisation, or correct order for words in a sentence and the hierarchical organisation or the grouping of words from different parts or the constituent structuring of sentences.

When the Terror descends
(and none denies its descending)
Abasing, exalting,
When the earth shall be rocked
And the mountains crumbled
and become a dust shattered,
Why, but when the soul leaps to the throat of the dying? …
Why … do you not bring back his soul? … (*Sura* LVI 1-6, 82, 86)

Cragg's (1991:335) reading of the last two lines of the above is as follows: 'Why, when life's breath comes into the very throat of the dying … why do you not cause the breath to return?' *The Bhagavad-Gita* (1994:38, 85) also mentions the need for the concentration of the entire corpus through the imperishable, in the all-pervading material cause of creation, as the one who 'abandoning the body, dies pronouncing the one syllabled Brahman *Om*'. The spiritual exercise of breathing is contained in Vedic study as: 'those whose object is breath-control offer the inhaled into the exhaled breath, and the exhaled into the inhaled' (1994:21). Again, the intertextual cries of suffering in life and death are illustrated in the Psalms (Ps. 22:1) and in the Christian New Testament gospels (Mk. 15:34), when Jesus faced death on the cross, through the cry: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' as he breathed his last (Mk. 15:37) and was committed to 'the dust of death' (Ps. 22:15).

Rosenzweig (Buber & Rosenzweig 1994: xiv) points out that 'breath is the stuff of speech'. It is a form of natural oral punctuation, whether through a deep breath, a 'catch-breath' or a breath-renewing silence. The first breath in a cry at birth and the last gasp at death are both marked by rituals or rites of passage, punctuated in between by cries uttered to mark a change of status. They are described as 'groanings which cannot be uttered' in respect of the tensions in prayer in the spirit to God (Rom. 8:26 KJV). Moreover, the primordial cry is common to all creatures capable of generating sounds, since all creatures arguably share in the fate of being consigned to suffer (Rom. 8:22). The significance of the sounds of wild animals, such as the lion and the bear and the cries of desert-type animals, such as the jackal and the ostrich, will be addressed later.

3.2.3 Psychological Signs of Grief

In the Hebrew language the catchy sigh of lament (*'êkāh*) with the repetition of the sound 'a' (24 times) in the opening stanza of the first poem, builds up and transfers pathos to the sympathetic ear of the listener, or the watchful eye of the reader. As the sound of the cries resonates from the 'Textual Strand' across to the 'Psychological Strand', poetic sighs and groans of mourning are chanted at intervals throughout the lyric, representing also psychological signs of grief. Waltke and O'Connor (1990:386) note that Jerusalem is *groaning* with a personal subject, which has a reflexive sense, as it refers to emotions which react upon the psyche. The Hebrew root *ĕnāḥ* takes up the sigh *'êkāh* through different guises, so through metonymy of the widow-city: her priests sigh (1:4. *ne'ĕnāḥîm*) and the metaphorical individual *'almānāh* sighs (1:8 *ne'ĕnāḥāh*). All the inhabitants of the *'almānāh* community sigh (1:11 *ne'ĕnāḥîm*), but the *'almānāh* personalises her feelings as she says: I was sighing (1:21 *mənāḥēm*) and ends with the very personal, my sighs are many (1:22 *'anḥo̲ṯay*). There seem to be no barriers of language or culture, status or sexuality, individuals or community in the sighs of grief. The Hebrew root *ĕnaḥ* through onomatopoeia and non-verbal behaviour expresses grief and distress from a background of associated signs of grief, such as when the people of Israel 'sighed' under the bondage of their taskmasters in Egypt and their cries brought them deliverance from a compassionate *yhwh* (Ex. 2:23). These sighs may be prompts to readers to remember similar experiences of disaster and difficulty when through periods of sighing or groaning there was a strong desire for miraculous answers.

Links could be made cross-culturally and intertextually to traditional faith experiences, such as in the New Testament where Jesus looks up to heaven and after a deep sigh or a groan, which could also be an inaudible prayer (Mk. 7:34 Gk. *stenazo*), he performs a miraculous healing. Jesus sighs again when the religious leaders ask him for a miraculous sign from heaven (Mk. 8:12). As Friebel (1999:290-293) suggests, the sigh is not only in response to the devastating circumstances, but also is linked to the motivating causes of the devastation.[67] The widow in Lamentations 1

[67] Friebel looks at the communicative meaning in terms of sign-acts in Ezekiel 21:6-7. He proposes that the prophet was demonstrating how the people were to react sorrowfully to the bad news which could have reference to the fall of Jerusalem, or the advance of the Babylonian army towards Jerusalem, or the message of God's impending judgement, which had already been given prophetically to the exiles.

draws attention to the emotion of grief and by her sighing she reinforces what she is saying verbally. Sighs thus become a language of catharsis. The barrier of empty words is overcome by giving the emotional expression *'êkāh* to the abandoned widow, which becomes an experience of catharsis and even comfort to her in her loneliness. Others in similar positions of social or economic need perhaps learn from this pattern and can be drawn to sit alongside and sigh with the *'almānāh*. This next section will expand how the grief story is not only expressed in the Hebrew Bible, but also told out across time and culture.

3.2.4 The Grief Story: *aleph*

Gottwald (1988:646) points out that the skilful shifts in speaker and point of view in the Lamentations lyrics create continuity of description, feeling and thought, which span the acrostics and overlay their otherwise 'fragmentary effect'. This thesis is concerned with the mythology of fragmented life, death and the survival of grief as perpetuated through the acrostic and through the repeated cries of lament, to some extent like Barthes' reflection on current events. Bannet (1989:73-75) explains Roland Barthes' art of writing. He listed strings of words on slips of paper called *fiches*.[68] Barthes produced his fragments to tell a story on his reflections on current events from images and captions before he polished each *fiche* into one of his named fragments and arranged them alphabetically to form a book in journals and newspapers. Eco (2004:12)[69] also gives an example of a family of words: *felis catus* or 'animal which miaows', which are linguistic strings different from 'cat'. In the same way, the Lamentations text strings fragmented images and families of word pictures on the 'Textual Strand' to gain a timeless cross-cultural response on the 'Psychological Strand'. The lament cry *'êkāh*, as an agonised cry of grief or pity, is linked to the *'almānāh* figure and her familial metonyms in Lamentations 1. Cross-cultural links are made to situations of loneliness, abandonment and isolation through the translation and interpretation of *'êkāh* into other languages and cultures. The alphabetic acrostic style of 'alone', the adverbial introduction of 'How!', or the

[68] Bannet details the process: 'He spreads his completed fiches on a table before him like "a rain, seeds, a dissemination, a web, a tissue, a text, a writing"'.

[69] Eco explains more fully that lexicographers not only provide definitions such as these linguistic strings but also provide instructions for contextual disambiguation. He gives the example of homonymy, where the term *bachelor* can mean in French *célibataire* (marital status), or *licencié* (a bachelor's degree), or in Italian *baccelliere* ('a young knight who follows the banner of another'). In a zoological context it is 'a male animal, like a seal, without a mate during breeding time'.

sorrowful cry of 'Alas!' or 'Oh, oh, oh!' allow humanity to express collectively what could remain only on the tip of the tongue of some individuals or remain unexpressed by others. *'Êkāh* is not translated, but left out altogether in some Bible Versions (e.g. GNB, LIV, HCV, CEV) so for some people maybe words are not necessary, or perhaps they are unable to translate their grief into words, so they use silence or some other means. However, a further Lamentation *aleph* stanza will now be explored as we examine the *'êkāh* of Lamentations 2.

3.3 Lamentations 2: *'êkāh* a Cry in Anger and Shame

Staying on the second 'Cross-strand', the second cry of *'êkāh* (Lam. 2:1) is encountered through the metaphorical image of 'Daughter Zion' (*baṯ-ṣiyyôn*) linked to the physical buildings of the royal city of Zion and the spiritual heritage of Jerusalem. The repetition of *'êkāh* at the start of the second lyric becomes a *mot crochet*, a powerful word connecting the new poem, not only with the title for all five poems, but also with the first poem and the fourth poem. Although the Hebrew word *'êkāh* is variously translated in different versions of the Bible, it is not a meaningless expletive, uttered in vain, just to adorn the acrostic poem, or even merely to fill in a metrical line. It is rather the quality of the voice and the tempo, pitch and rhythm, referred to by Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:79) as 'tonal shadings', which is important. It is a 'vocal characterizer' (Knapp 1978:18-19), or 'paralanguage' (Friebel 1999:40),[70] which will lead the reader to the violence and destructive power of war.

The cry or sigh, *'êkāh*, warns the reader that there is an aggressively troublesome setting, which leads into the theme of the fiery destruction of the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, accompanied by an emotional smouldering at her indignity. Rimmon-Kenan (1996:46) posits that adverbs of time, such as how and when, 'suggest order, duration and frequency'. *'Êkāh* asks 'how often?' as a question of frequency, since the *'almānāh* also cried *'êkāh* in the previous lamentation. It asks 'how long?' in terms of duration, since it is slowed down by repetition, and quickened by gapping, as will be seen in more detail in 3.4 through the patterns of *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-'ammî*. It also asks

[70] Friebel posits that paralanguage incorporates the non-verbal elements involved in *how* something is said, not *what* is said in voice qualities such as tempo, pitch, rhythm and articulation control and in vocalizations a) vocal qualifiers e.g. intensity, pitch, height and extent, b) vocal segregates e.g. 'uh-huh', 'um', 'uh', 'ah' and c) vocal characterizers e.g. laughing, crying, sighing, coughing, moaning, groaning, whining, yelling, whispering and sneezing.

when and where in the sense of position e.g. first or last, before or after, in the sense of 'remembering' through flashback and retrospection, foreshadowing and anticipation.

The opening wail of *'êkāh* in Lamentations 2 develops into a crescendo of lamentation over the physical destruction of the city and its temple. Unspeakable pain accompanies the loss of the familiar city life, the withdrawal of *yhwh*'s presence as the sanctuary is desecrated and community life in the temple seems to have come to an end. O'Connor (2002:13) writes so vividly that the alphabetic acrostic signifies the enormity of suffering and:

> tries to force unspeakable pain into a container that is familiar and recognizable even as suffering eludes containment. It implies that suffering is infinite, for it spans the basic components of written language from beginning to end.

The cry of *'êkāh* cannot be contained by the boundaries of the acrostic as will be shown from the following stanzas of Lamentations 2:

1. ***'êkāh*!**
   yhwh in his wrath
   Has shamed ***baṯ-ṣiyyôn***
   Has cast down from heaven to earth
   The majesty of ***yiśrāêl*.**
5. [*yhwh*] has increased ***bəbaṯ-yəhûdāh***
   mourning and moaning **(*ta'ăniyyāh wa'ăniyyāh*).**
18. Their heart cried out to the Lord.
   O wall of ***baṯ-ṣiyyôn*,**
   Shed tears like a torrent
   Day and night! (***wālaylāh*)**
19. Arise cry out in the night (***ballaylāh***)[71]

The cry of *'êkāh* seems like a magical form which continually overflows the prescriptive form of acrostic. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* breathes force and energy into the lyric through increased assonance by the chanting, almost 'wonder-working', invocation of

[71] Extracted from the Hebrew and Tanakh versions - noting the sound device in 'mourning and moaning', cf. 'moaning and groaning' (MSG) and the lack of alliteration in the translation 'mourning and lamentation' (KJV).

the very specific Hebrew words תַּאֲנִיָּה וַאֲנִיָּה (*ta'ăniyyāh wa'ăniyyāh* Lam. 2:5).[72] The Chouraqui version[73] aptly translates this angry 'mourning and moaning' also alliteratively, as: *ô grogne, ô rogne*, so does the Haitian Créole Version through its rendering of: *plenn sou plenn* (sigh upon sigh). The accumulation of synonymy and repetition of sound becomes a multi-cultural way of expression and a constant reminder of the awfulness of the event. It is on-going grief in the fullest sense, for tears run down like a river day (*wālaylāh* Lam. 2:18)[74] and night (*b̲allaylāh* Lam. 2:19) as if in there is an echoing of cries heard through assonance, alliteration and onomatopoeia. There is consonance in the sounds as well as a cacophony of dissonance. This sound resonates with T.S. Eliot's poem (1922) *The Waste Land III The Fire Sermon* (1973:37), where the repeated line 'Weialala leia Wallala leialala'[75] goes beyond rhythm and words to borrowed sounds in an attempt to express the poet's own personal conflict. Sounds evoke a response, and the emotional sounds of crying become physical tears, which affect the inner being as the heart is 'poured out like water' (Lam. 2:19 cf. Ps. 22:14). *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s internal feelings, expressed in tears, resonate with the city's external gushing torrents (Lam. 2:18), flowing over and watering the dry and burnt land. Despite the emptiness of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s heart there is a hint of creative refreshment and hope for survival in the war-torn wilderness of her barren land. However, it is short-lived in a sudden realisation that escape is not possible (Lam. 2:22). Will *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* find a coping strategy through the framework of acrostic or the cry of *'êkāh* by staying with the rhythm of disruption of her life on the helix model?

3.3.1 Cultic Cries

The Message version of Lamentations illustrates an attempt to capture the rhythm and cry of *'êkāh* and *qînâ* through the cross-cultural translation 'Oh, oh, oh …' in a sense of anger and derision between *yhwh* and *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* in Lamentations 2. The 'gone,

[72] See also Isa. 29:2 for a similar theme where there is a pronouncement of woe and heaviness on *ariel* the 'lion of God' and lamentation on *ariel* the 'altar-hearth'. *Ta'ăniyyāh wa'ăniyyāh* only occurs in Isa. 29:2 and in Lam. 2:5). See also Isa. 3:26 and 19:8 for other forms of the root *anaḥ*: to groan, lament, and mourn.

[73] I have cited the Chouraqui and the Haitian Créole translations, because they, like the Tanakh version, clearly illustrate how cries become cross-cultural as they communicate beyond the simple usage of a word cf. '*les douleurs et les plaintes*' (BDS), which translates the words but not the sound of grief.

[74] From an unused Hebrew root *layil* meaning to fold back, a spiral step, a winding stair, a twist away from the light, thus meaning night and figuratively, adversity.

[75] A syncopated rhythmic cry borrowed from Wagner's Opera *Gotterdammerung*. Initially a joyous refrain sung by the Rhine Daughters, but later in the twist of events it turned to mourning.

gone, gone' of the closing stanza thus forms a concatenation of sound, time, and space through an *inclusio*, which becomes a container of lament cries and grief sounds:

> 2.1 **Oh, oh, oh** … How the Master has cut down Daughter Zion
> from the skies, dashed Israel's glorious city to earth,
> in his anger treated his favorite as throwaway junk.
> 2.22 You are invited like friends to a party, men to swoop down in attack
> so that on the big day of God's wrath no one would get away.
> The children I loved and reared … **gone, gone, gone**.[76]

The Hebrew poetic acoustics give us patterns of cries, which enable others not only to hear the sustained Hebrew lament rhythm (not unlike listening to different complaints of grief, sometimes loneliness, sometimes, anger, etc.), but also to echo back our own cries of grief. Other aNE texts of laments in Mesopotamia also maintain feelings of national humiliation and destruction through repeated cries, in other languages and by other female deities such as in the *balag* composition called *Immal Gudede*, ('The Loving Cow' cited by Gerstenberger 2001:486):

> On account of the destruction of the chamber, the bedroom of the Urshaba, … the lament of **the small city cries out** all day long.
> On account of the destruction of the shrine of Guabba,
> **Nimmar**, over the shrine of Guabba **cries out** all day long.
> On account of the destruction of Dumusagubba,
> my mother, **Nanâ, cries out** all day long.
> On account of the destruction of the brickwork of Sippar,
> Aya, **the beautiful woman, cries out** all day long. (boldface mine)

Widow Jerusalem and Daughter Zion also cry out in Lamentations 1 and 2, but unlike the above female deities they seem to have lost their beauty on account of the destruction of the city. Another example of the cry of 'Alas!' occurs in 'Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur' (Michalowski 43 and 45 cited in Gerstenberger 2001:488):

> The temple of Kis, Hursagkalama, was destroyed,
> Zababa took an unfamiliar path away from his beloved dwelling,

[76] Boldface mine. The aim of the translations such as the MSG is to maintain the vitality and directness, but at the same time bring into the [American] English the rhythms and idioms of the original language.

Mother Ba'u was lamenting bitterly in her Urukug,
"Alas, the destroyed city, my destroyed temple!" bitterly she cries …
Kazallu, the city of teeming multitudes, was wrought with confusion,
Numusdu took an unfamiliar path away from the city, his beloved dwelling,
His wife Namrat, the beautiful lady, was lamenting bitterly,
"Alas" the destroyed city, my destroyed temple!" bitterly she cries …
(boldface mine)

The destruction of the temple is mentioned and as Gerstenberger (2001:488) points out 'the "Alas" phrase seems to be a stereotyped cultic shout, repeated … put into the mouth of goddesses'. However, as mentioned earlier, I am arguing that *'êkāh* cries and other articulations of grief are not necessarily a cultic shout, but rather form part of a sensory and distinctive feature of each Lamentation lyric, which catches the reader/listener's attention through agonising cries and probing questions. Abrams (2005:177) suggests that 'a motif is a conspicuous element, such as a type of event, device, reference, or formula, which occurs frequently in works of literature'.[77] In Lamentations the motif involves the *aleph* of the acrostic pattern, a cry of lament in the loss of the ideal past and the introduction of a metaphorical city figure. Further discussions will take place in the following chapters through reflection on images of lament and grief, but next we look at further sounds.

3.3.2 '*āh*!' and '*māh*' Sounds

In Lamentations 2 the suffix *-āh*[78] occurs twenty-four times throughout the lyric. In Lam. 2:13 there is an intensive build up through three rhetorical questions, each of which is preceded by the 'hyper-ventilating'[79] word *māh*, maybe what Parkes (1972:60) would call a pang of grief, an episode of severe anxiety and psychological pain, or what Derrida would refer to as hyper, over, above and beyond (Linafelt

[77] Abrams notes also that common in lyric poems is the ubi sunt motif, the 'where-are' formula for lamenting the vanished past, such as 'Where are the snows of yesteryear?' This resonates with Bowlby's task of 'yearning and searching' and the strong yearnings to 'remember' so typical of grief.
[78] Lam. 2:1 *'êkāh* 2:2, 5 *bat- yəhûdāh*, 2:2 *mamlākāh*, 2:3 *lehābāh 'āklāh*, 2:5 *hāyāh, bəbat- yəhûdāh, ta'ăniyyāh wa'ăniyyāh* 2:6 *šikkaḥ* 2:7 *zānaḥ* 2:8 *naṭah* 2:9 *malkāh, ṭôrāh* 2:11 *qiryāh* 2:13 *māh, māh, māh* 2:18 *dim'āh, wālaylāh* 2:19 *ballaylāh* 2:20 *wəhabbîṭāh, 'im-tō'kalnāh* 2:22 *hāyāh.*
[79] Parkes observes from his studies of adult bereavement that 'the most characteristic feature of grief is not prolonged depression but acute and episodic "pangs". A pang of grief is an episode of severe anxiety and psychological pain. Feelings of panic, a dry mouth, deep sighing, respiration, restless but aimless hyperactivity, difficulty in concentrating on anything but thoughts of loss, ruminations around the events leading up to the loss, loss of interest in others and things that normally give pleasure'.

2000b:31).[80] The persistence of survival, following on from the opening sigh *'êkāh*' (How) is a continuance of being in the face of nothingness:

> How (*māh*) can I understand your plight, dear Jerusalem?
> What (*māh*) can I say to give you comfort, dear Zion?
> Who (*māh*) can put you together again? (Lam. 2:13 MSG)

'Êkāh ('How!') is amplified through the repetition of *māh* ('How!') which could be demonstrating that breathing becomes difficult in the passion of grief. Job experienced this problem. Under God's anger he contended: 'he does not let me catch my breath' (Job 9:18). *Māh* is used in a threefold accusatory question: Who can understand? What is the problem and why? When will this end? There is a remarkable similarity to Kant's three questions 'What can I know?' 'What ought I to do?' 'What may I hope?' Further links can be made to Ricoeur's relation of human freedom and nature by progressing through a speculative, a practical and then a 'poetic' stage in a passionate search for the possible. Vanhoozer (1990:38) goes on to say that 'hope may be the passion for the possible, but not every possibility can be realised'.

Qoheleth also asks questions about the status quo when faced with a chasm which separated him from the heart of the wisdom tradition. Job in his dilemma wanted to retreat back to his mother's womb before he even took a breath. Conversely, it would seem that there is a quest for meaning in life through the gasping breathing by *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* even though the home and identity of the Zion tradition, in which *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* had developed, had changed so radically. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s cry brings an awareness of the real, but fleeting, quality of the breath of life and the insubstantial quality of rewards for striving, or as Crenshaw (1981:128-9) puts it: 'feeding upon air'.[81]

The repeated cries form part of public expression of grief at a mourning ceremony and become a private deep inner expression of sorrow for those who grieve. In uttering these sounds, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* and the reader form part of the community of humanity,

[80] Derrida points out that in etymological senses survival depends on the use of the prefix sur-, super-, hyper-, or over-, (über).
[81] Crenshaw refers to Eccl. 2:17 and comments on *hebel* and *reuth ruach*: 'Between him [Qoheleth] and old wisdom, stretched a great abyss'.

which unite beyond the boundaries of male and female, young and old, bound and free, rich and poor, religious and irreligious, immersed in what Van Leeuwen (1999:28) calls 'wrap around sound'. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, and those who join her, do survive and do cope through the vestiges of hope that appear in the concordant-discordant setting of people who weep and cry *'êkāh* in their local context of a crumbling establishment. The cry of grief in the third lyric is very different and will be discussed in 3.6 after the *'êkāh* of the fourth lyric.

3.4 Lamentations 4: *'êkāh 'êkāh* a Double Cry of Depression

'Êkāh opens the fourth lyric as a repetitive refrain, perpetuating the *aleph* of the acrostic form. *'Êkāh* is also repeated in the second stanza, thus intensifying a sense of the people's loss and also forming part of the cameo of the metaphorical duo of 'Children of Zion/My Poor People' (*bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-'ammî*). I am positing that translations and interpretations of these cries on the second 'Cross-strand' of the helix model bring to the reader's attention lament expressions that could have been lost. The cries are aNE expressions of lament, but crying out and asking questions of 'How?' or 'Why?' are also recognised as an important part of grief today.

The double cry becomes a 'sacrament of speech' expressing the inexpressible as a form of prayer, perhaps not unlike the New Testament idea of 'speaking in tongues', which Hardy and Ford (1984:19) refer to as a 'cathedral of sound', where there is freedom so that 'the tongue can run on with no worry of making sentences'. Theissen (in Rollins and Kille 2007:223-225) suggests that there are three dimensions of language: the expressive, the semantic, and the appellative.[82] I am suggesting that *'êkāh* as a deep sigh of lament performs as a 'sacrament of speech', which becomes a sign that effects what it signifies. Hardy and Ford (1984:20) continue: 'it signifies free speech in relation to God and received from God'. The *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî* are expressing their lament in both literary and emotional sound patterns. Although these cries in Lam. 4:1-2 are the reverse of the praise, exult and hallelujah of the thanksgiving and hymnic psalms (Pss. 9, 34, 111, 112, 145), nevertheless, they show by their presence that there is still some point in expressing confidence in *yhwh*.

[82] Theissen adds that although in the experience of glossolalia the dimension of the semantic is lost, there are fragments of language that involuntarily evoke significant associations. Communication can be through the linguistic expression of intonation, tempo and tone or non-verbal expression through posture, mimicry and gestures.

The double cry of grief will be developed in more detail through the aspect of a twofold metaphorical image of the depressed people as *bənê ṣiyyôn* (Lam. 4:2) and *baṯ-ʻammî* (Lam. 4:3) in Chapter 7. However, in this context, *bənê ṣiyyôn* and the second sigh interact metaphorically with the images of dulled gold, earthen pots and sacred gems spilled in the street in a very effective way, indicating a mood of devaluation and loss of status set by the first sigh, which could be interpreted as the depressive sigh of lament. Soskice (1985:22) observes that although 'brevity is for the most part a virtue of metaphor', nevertheless, 'it is a curious fact that it may take more than one sentence to establish a metaphor'. In the Hebrew text of Lam. 4:2 the second cry of *ʾêkāh* and the second cameo of *baṯ-ʻammî* link back to the crying and tears of the ruined *baṯ-ʻammî* mentioned in Lam. 2:11 in the depressive situation where babies are refused the comfort of their mother's breast.

3.4.1 Neglect and Survival

The double *ʾêkāh* links to other human cries such as the *ʾalmānāh*'s lonely cry (Lam. 1:1) in the absence of comfort in the loss of her husband and to the sigh of anger and shame in the vulnerable *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s experience of anger, abuse and shame (Lam. 2:1). In this setting of devastation the double cry (Lam. 4:1-2) is prolonged through the cries of wilderness creatures, such as jackals and ostriches, in their seemingly ambivalent cruel/compassionate behaviour towards death and their young. On the one hand *ʾêkāh* shows approval of an order of creation in a rather savage form of survival. On the other hand it shows suspicion, or denial, of the Deuteronomic order of deed and consequence and the Zionist view of inviolability. Furthermore this suspicion and denial is extended to the wisdom teaching of a right way or a wrong way and prophetic confession and return, which come from God and religious traditions. At least the jackal suckles its young and survives death and the wilderness! This raises a question over the *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-ʻammî* experience with God, the community experience together and relationships with the world beyond the group. How do they survive?

This setting of oppression raises another cry in the struggle over the problem of indiscriminate destruction, brought to the reader's attention by the comparative interpretation of the city of Sodom (Lam. 4:6; Gen. 18:20). The outcry against Jerusalem is even worse than the angry accusation of Sodom. Leaders,

metaphorically named by Sawyer (1995:154-5) as 'chieftains of Sodom' (Isa. 1:10) had become arrogant. Perhaps the Lamentation poet is pointing out the similar in the dissimilar in a comparison of Jerusalem with Sodom.

3.4.2 Sound Repetition as a Defence Mechanism

Alternatively, the build up from previous lyrics and the repetition of cries and images in the fourth lyric could become a form of defence mechanism. Through a counter-projection there is an obsession to remain in a recurring trauma-causing situation, thus becoming a victim of circumstances through a compulsive obsession with other perceived perpetrators of the trauma. According to Freud (1985b:36) such obsessive repetition may take place without the understanding of its chief meaning. In essence, it could be an unconscious ceremony or exaggerated patterns of behaviour. In the Hebrew versions of the Lamentations text the repetitive grief cries of *'êkāh*, the cry of self-pity in suffering *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* (Lam. 3:1) and the cry to God to 'Remember … Behold and see!' (*zəkōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh* Lam. 5:1) express the horror of suffering in the language of cries.

Lamentations 4 frames its response to catastrophe through the cries of *bənê ṣiyyôn*/ *baṭ-'ammî* as a communal cry. The people as a community retell their experiences in a cathartic we/our form in Lam. 4:18, as they relive their memories. The sense of the initial breath-taking horror could cause the people who remained to freeze and become immobile. The lack of hope of deliverance expressed in the following words could be the experience of any city in the world in the aftermath of destruction:

> our steps were checked,
> we could not walk in our squares,
> our doom is near (Lam. 4:18)

In the cameo of Lam. 4:1-2 the absurd truth of grief is told and heard through death wails and the sorrowful cries of starving children. So the singer or reader is prompted to listen for cries from the wilderness environment where life is cruel and survival is uncertain. The tension of textual form and emotional content is apparent here as the ordered acrostic is interrupted by cries, as people hover between the borders of life and death. The noise of the wilderness predominates through the terrifying groans

and guttural night cry of the ostrich in its territorial defence against predators. Metaphorically jackals yell and scream in a siren-like howl over a kill just made or a carcase/dead body found. The screech of birds of prey, such as the eagle, is a symbolic reminder of power and domination (Lam. 4:19). Through the 'mimicry of animal noises' (Aristotle in Heath 1996:xiii) the lyric becomes 'an expression of human instinct for *mimesis*'. Thus, through the display of these 'more elementary forms of behaviour' readers are able to engage with a creation of likeness. The cry at the time of the killing implies food for survival and at the same time the death of its victim. The dissonance of *'êkāh* becomes the consonance of the jackal's cry.

I.A. Richards (in Soskice 1985:28) notes that 'a metaphor says only what shows on its face - usually a patent falsehood or an absurd truth'. Nevertheless, ironically the crackling of fire (Lam. 4:11), which had burnt down the city, had also left *bat-'ammî*'s faces black with soot and therefore probably unrecognisable. Through the destructive and scorching nature of fire and the inevitable lack of produce, their skin has become shrivelled and their bones dry (Lam. 4:8) through heat and starvation. Those who had survived the catastrophe reflect and confess that the priests and the prophets have become not only blind, but also murderers. To add to the cruel picture, others shout 'Away! Unclean! Away! Away! Touch not!' (Lam. 4:15). This is an urgent cry, which breaks down community, defies logic and overcomes the powerful status quo.

So far this thesis has focused on Lamentations 1, 2, and 4, and the sound of *'êkāh*, but Lamentations 3 begins with a different form of cry: it is the *geber*'s self assertive expression, which bargains its way through suffering, which will now be considered.

3.5 Lamentations 3: *'ănî … 'ŏnî* a Self-defensive Cry

In the third Lamentation lyric the very personal and extensive pains of the *geber*'s war wounds sound out through the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet and the first person singular pronoun: 'I am (*'ănî*) the warrior (*haggéber*) who has seen affliction (*'ŏnî*)'. The assonance of the Hebrew *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* links the beginning and end of the first line, thus, as Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:111) notes: 'matching linguistically the hurt with the one who is hurt'. Morla (2004:241) makes the point that the absence of *'êkāh* does not cause a gap in the text, because there is a shift in the role of the speaker.

Such polyphony gives the Lamentations text its unity and diversity and a multi-cultural tendency.

The 'I am the man' (Lam. 3:1) is the self-presenting voice of the Hebrew *geber*, an individual male protesting against his wounded state, expressing his case in the form of a complaint *'ănî ... 'ŏnî*, which I will argue in 6.2.2 is a form of plea-bargaining. Broyles (1989:52) makes a distinction between plea and complaint by explaining that plea simply brings the distress to God's attention, whilst complaint brings the distress to God's attention, as a matter for which he is at least partly responsible. I am using the terms protest, plea, lament and complaint fairly flexibly in connection with this cry. Intertextual allusions to the conflict between the traditional ideal and the practical experience of life are evident in the self-presenting protest of Moses: 'I am slow of speech' (Ex. 4:10) and in Solomon's inaugural plea for judgement in leadership: 'I am a young lad' (1Kgs. 3:7). The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel express their confusion through the exclamatory cry of pain, *'ahahh*. Jeremiah complains of his own inadequacy to speak (Jer. 1:6) and accuses *yhwh*/*ādōnāy* of deceiving the people (Jer. 4:10, 14:13). Likewise Ezekiel protests his purity in a setting of defilement (Ezek. 4:14) and the innocence of those left in Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:8, 11:13). Von Rad (1998:267) suggests that for Jeremiah and Ezekiel 'the prophetic "I" becomes very much more prominent' as in the world-shaping events of their time. Von Rad explains that they become more detached in spiritual and theological aliveness and more self-dependent than their predecessors, thus becoming freer in their forms of expression and in their dealings with *yhwh*, so that they would turn on *yhwh* with their complaints and reproaches. I am suggesting that the *geber* enters personally and confidently into the critical and almost sceptical debate of his time, by bargaining for justice and mercy, using his own individual pattern and vocabulary and bringing a different slant to lamentation. Like Job (Job 10:15) he presents himself as both guilty and innocent in his affliction (*'ŏnî*). Elijah also complains in a mood-swing from celebrating success in battle to the fear of defeat: 'I (*'ănî*) alone am left and they are out to take my life' (1 Kgs. 19:10). The Psalmist (Ps. 25:16) pleads 'I am desolate and afflicted' (*'ănî ... 'ŏnî*). However, there is a suggestion that the nameless *geber* is the prophet Jeremiah, because of the introduction to the Septuagint version *Thrēnos*:

> And it came to pass after Israel was taken captive and Jerusalem was made desolate, Jeremiah sat down weeping, and he wailed this lamentation over Jerusalem and he said …

In a cross-cultural setting the formula resembles the powerful and authoritative self-presentation of kings in royal inscriptions from the aNE. For example: 'I am Azitiwada, the blessed one of Baal, a servant of Baal, whom Awarku, king of the Danumians, made powerful' or 'I am Zakkur, king of Hamathand Lu'ath. A humble man am I' (Dobbs-Allsopp 2002:108). Alternatively, intertextually, it could demonstrate a relationship of divine commitment, as when *yhwh* revealed himself to Moses as: 'I am the Lord (*yhwh*) … I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as El Shaddai' (Ex. 6:2). It could depict the power of the God of Israel as worshipped by the prophets as distinctly male and warrior-like, as Clines (2002) suggests 'I am a great King, says *yhwh*, Lord of fighting men, and my name is feared among the nations' (Mal. 1:14). Another example could be the confirmation of pride of status as for Cicero (106-43 BCE): '*Civis Romanus sum*' (in Verrem, V.lvii. 147) – 'I am a Roman citizen'. The rhetorical defence by the Christian Apostle Paul in a legal case, designed to stress his status as someone given authority to speak on important issues: 'I am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a citizen of an important city' (Acts 21:39, 22:3). The personification of wisdom: 'I am wisdom' (Prov. 8:12, 34). In the Christian New Testament Jesus used the authoritative metaphorical 'I am' images[83] when facing problems with illness and health, life and death as individuals and groups (e.g. his disciples, family groups, religious groups, townships) approached him (Jn. 11:25). Jesus also groaned, wept (Jn. 11:34) and was deeply moved (Jn. 11:38) in compassion with the bereaved family who was being comforted by their religious and social groupings (Jn. 11:31).

The *ge<u>b</u>er*, presented in the text as a strong male image, does not utter the *'êkāh* wail of the female mourning imagery of the *'almānāh* and the *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn*, nor does he cry like the oppressed *ba<u>t</u>-'ammî* of Lamentations 4. Nevertheless, some may suggest the NRSV translation of *'ănî haggé<u>b</u>er* as 'I am one' (Lam. 3:1) rather than 'I am the man', implies that *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* is a gender-less cry of suffering. The *ge<u>b</u>er*'s self presentation and moaning and groaning, which eventually bring tears and a reasoned

[83] See other sayings e.g. 'I am the light of the world' (Jn. 9:5), 'I am the good shepherd' (Jn. 10:11).

petition is dealt with in Chapter 6, which leads into a communal prayer and cry of community in the final lyric in Chapter 8.

3.6 Lamentations 5: *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* a Tripartite Cry

Lamentations 5 has lost the regularity of the *aleph* to *tav* of the acrostic form. Nevertheless, it begins again with a cry. This time it is in the first person plural of a community, who address *yhwh* direct, asking him 'to remember' (*zəḵ̲ōr*),[84] 'to look intently' (*habbeṭ*) and 'to see' (*ûrə'ēh*) what has befallen 'us' and to 'see our disgrace'. Magonet (1994:178) suggests that *zəḵ̲ōr* means to remember in the sense of calling something into existence. It also means to 'call out' or 'speak out'. The threefold plea is the regular communal complaint formula. It becomes the introduction and plea for several metaphorical groups of 'people in disgrace' (*ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû*), as they lift their lament to *yhwh* throughout the 22 verses. This communal lament calls to mind something that has already happened. The metaphorical groups of Lamentations 1-4 have already spoken out about the situation and called upon *yhwh,* but apparently in vain.

This threefold petition, however, is immediate and is focused on *yhwh* in the opening stanza. The all-inclusive cry to *yhwh* is to remember that 'our mothers are like widows' (Lam. 5:3), thus linking to the lonely *'almānāh*, who recalled her past, but in her abandonment by *yhwh* gave no thought to her future (Lam. 1:7, 1:9). The *'almānāh* and others who received no comfort from *yhwh* join the angry *baṯ̲-ṣiyyôn* community, whom *yhwh* did not remember (Lam. 2:1). Both groups ask him to behold and see (Lam. 1:9, 11, 2:19) their sorrow, in a catalogue of grief cries. The bargaining *geḇ̲er*, on behalf of his community, also invokes *yhwh* to remember his misery (Lam. 3:19) and see how he has been wronged (Lam. 3:59, 63). The situation then becomes more desperate in the overtly pronounced wilderness setting of Lamentations 4, where *yhwh* turns his face away from the young and vulnerable, so that he will no longer look on the dire situation of the *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ̲-'ammî* people (Lam. 4:16). Thus this question of whether *yhwh* will remember his people (Lam. 5:1) or whether he has forgotten them 'utterly' and 'for all time' (Lam. 5:20) is addressed in more detail through the cries of supplication in Lamentations 5.

[84] Can mean also to call to mind, be faithful (to covenant), take into consideration, make mention of and be mindful of (Ed. Clines CDCH 2009:100).

The invocation to remember has both a positive and a negative aspect, as illustrated throughout the Hebrew Bible. The expectation of *yhwh* is that he will remember his promises to his people in creation (Gen. 9:15), in posterity (Ex. 32:13) and in compassion and thus forget, i.e. not remember, his people's transgressions (Ps. 25:6-7). Thus Job asks God to remember that his life is but wind (Job 7:7), recognising the God-given power of the breath of life, but at the same time the transience of his existence. The Psalmist (Ps. 74:1-4, 22) asks why *yhwh* rejects his people in anger and goes on to ask him to remember the intimate nature of the relationship he had with them long ago and the sacredness that once existed in the meeting place of the sanctuary. The Psalmist reminds *yhwh* not to forget the reproach from the foolish, which has also caused his people to be in disgrace (*ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* Lam. 5:1).

Shame, which is so often not brought into the open because of its very nature, is portrayed in the uncovering of violence against the community and against the individual throughout the Hebrew Bible. For example, the personal violence of the rape of Tamar is not acknowledged either by the abuser, or allowed to be voiced in community, except through the mourning rituals of putting ashes on her head, tearing her garments, putting her hands on her head and walking away screaming loudly.
The desecration of the temple (Ps. 79:4) and the resultant violent invasion of Israel's religious privacy are openly declared through the communal lament of 'reproach, scorn and derision', which, as Rodd (2001:389) suggests, implies an insult to *yhwh* as well.

The triple reproach of the community is thus counteracted by the threefold invocation to *yhwh* to 'remember, look and see', because the fact that the people cried and were not delivered by their God, will reflect back on him and will be interpreted as a lack of trustworthiness. The reputation of *yhwh* is also at stake: he also will experience reproach and shame if he does remember them, look upon their grief, see their suffering and answer their tripartite cry. As Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:142) observes of Lamentations 5: 'a myriad of small gestures of coherence are tying this poem inextricably to the rest; closure is achieved, but in a way that is fitting and appropriate'. Timing is important, for the occasion will come when 'the reproach of widowhood' will be forgotten, 'the barrenness of the wilderness experience' will not be in the forefront of the memory and the cry of shame will be turned into a song of

open confidence. The apparent absence of *yhwh*, his anger and his silence will be changed into the restored relationship of trust, kindness and love. However, this has not yet been realised for the people, who continue to cry out in grief in Lamentations, right to the last stanza.

3.7 Conclusion

In summary, with Balasz, I am positing that the Lamentations poet has heard significant sounds in life as expressed in the words of *'êkāh*, *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* and *zə<u>k</u>ōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh*. These cries can be heard through the rhythm of the *qînâ* meter, within the safe boundaries of the acrostic and can also develop into further tears and wailing sounds within the safety of the lyrics. However, they overflow barriers of tradition and resonate across time and culture, becoming cries of loneliness, anger, bargaining, depression and prayer. Through the flexibility of the helix model, cries that had not been heard, can be listened to, and by careful translation and interpretation be re-instated. These five Lamentations can bring new insights to grief expression today that could have been lost, and in turn, psychological insights can provide new approaches to the lyrics so that the cry of grief is translated and interpreted according to the needs of the reader in community. The following chapters will examine in more detail how this works through the metaphorical actions and voices of the opening stanza of each of the five lyrics, starting with Lam. 1:1 and corporal experiences and body actions of the metaphorical *'almānāh* as she cries *'êkāh* and sits isolated from her community.

PART III - REFLECTIONS ON THE IMAGERY OF LAMENTATIONS 1-5

Introduction to Metaphor

In Parts I and II discussions have focussed on how the five Lamentations lyrics can provide overall frameworks for individuals and communities to cry out in textual lament and psychological grief. Part III develops this synthesis of Lamentations and grief further, by bringing a fusion of named images into one commanding image, as the helix acts as a model (see Figure 4, p.33). It is through the imaginative power of metaphor that the similar and dissimilar have been brought together, to surprise the reader, to bring about tensions in relationships, to rebel against tradition and to upset conventions. According to Soskice (1985:15) scholars have put forward some 125 different ways of how metaphor works and some of these ideas will now be reviewed.

Soskice (1985:15) suggests as a working definition, that 'metaphor is a figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms of another'. She continues to explain more specifically, that in respect of a text, it is about vision, imagination and fusion, whilst for philosophy of science it refers to paradigm, analogy and model. Therefore, the next five chapters will show how in addition to the acrostic form and stages of grief and their accompanying grief cries, the reader can see examples of grief processes through the creative power of imagery, as we now move to consider the third 'Cross-strand' of the helix model.

Key words link the lyrics and act as sign-posts of grief, making sure that through poetic repetition words such as *'êkāh* are seen and translated and thus heard and understood empathetically. But metaphor is more than the sight and sound of words. For Aristotle, as Ricoeur (2003:19) notes, metaphor involves the transference of a name.[85] So in the text and on our model, the people suffering loss are named, metaphorically, not only with words, but also clothed with imagery as *'almānāh* (a widow, Lam. 1:1), *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (a daughter, Lam. 2:1), *geber* (a warrior, Lam. 3:1), *bənê ṣiyyôn* (children, Lam. 4:2), and in a general way as *baṯ-'ammî* (poor people, Lam. 4:3, 3:48) and *ḥerpāṯēnû* (our disgrace, Lam. 5:1).

[85] Aristotle describes this transposition of a name as 'alien' that is a name that belongs to something else.

In literary critical work, metaphor involves 'naming the unnamed' and in so doing, as Hauerwas (1990:82) points out, it names the silences of suffering. For Richards (1936:100) metaphor becomes a vehicle to lead to the tenor and together they become more powerful. For example the vehicle of *'almānāh* leads to the tenor of the lonely and isolated person in an empty city. According to Soskice (1985:16), citing Herbert Read (1928), metaphor is: 'the synthesis of several units of observation into one commanding image; it is the expression of a complex idea, not by analysis, nor by abstract statement, but by a sudden perception of an objective relation'. So the *'almānāh* in her loneliness, sits apart, is separated from her friends and family and does not take part in social events. She moves from the confines of her comfortable social and religious boundaries into a state of liminality on the margins of society. Furthermore, through metonymy, the parts signify the whole, so that the city and her people are also represented by various significant names, such as Jerusalem (1:7, 8), Zion (1:3, 16, 17) and Judah (1:3, 15). For the *'almānāh*, her eyes and hands represent the senses of the corporeal activity in grief and her figure acts as a member of the bereaved community.

For Max Black (1962:36) metaphor is a screen, filter, or lens to bring two separate domains together. Ricoeur (2003:74) notes that in Black's theory, the word remains the 'focus' even while it requires the 'frame' of the sentence . In the second lyric the lens focuses on the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* image (Chapter 5), as she struggles to maintain her identity with dignity, in the violence of national disaster, the abandonment of her God and in the ignominy of social breakdown. She brings together the beauty and destruction of a thriving city, the anger and shame of all its inhabitants through the metonymical representations of walls, sanctuary, and citadels.

Beardsley (1958:143) suggests that new contextual meaning is created, which brings the connotation to life. Ricoeur (2003:17) argues that metaphor is something that happens to the noun and can be defined in terms of movement as a sort of displacement, a movement 'from … to …', which keeps the symbolic image alive. The *geḇer* image (Chapter 6) represents a warrior whose prowess, strength and authority is wounded, but he survives as he implements his battle plan to bargain his way through suffering. His weaponry consists not only of words, but also of arrows and stones.

McFague (1983:17) points out that ‘good metaphors shock, they bring unlikes together, they upset conventions, they involve tension, and they are implicitly revolutionary’. The *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-ʻammî* images (Chapter 7) reflect a fading spectrum of colour, as the wilderness and animal imagery expose brutal devastation, but cry out: ‘it is enough’. The *ḥerpāṯēnû* image (Chapter 8) finally raises questions of when all this will end. This ‘piling up of images’ (1983:20) gives the reader richness and variety which become dynamic and transforming rather than dead and extinct.

This next chapter will proceed to look at Lamentations 1, the metaphorical *ʼalmānāh* and the theme of loneliness.

4. Lonely … Like an *'almānāh* in Lamentations 1

ahhhhhh … How am I to manage? What am I to do? Who should I speak to? Because even he who I might have spoken to exists no longer! Nyiranyamibwa (Rwanda)

4.1 The *'almānāh* and the Loneliness Theme

The focus is now on the third 'Cross-strand' of the helix model (Figure 7) and how through metaphorical imagery the *'almānāh* in the first Lamentation lyric acts out her feelings of loneliness and isolation. In Lam. 1:1 'How lonely sits the city' is

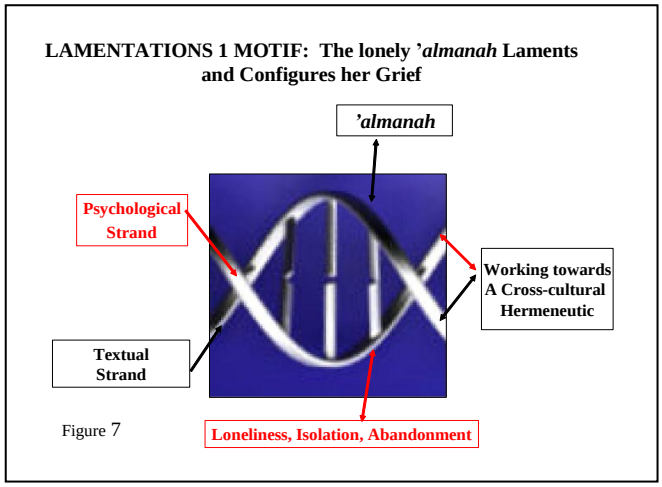


Figure 7

juxtaposed with 'How like a widow (*ke'almānāh*) she has become'. This makes a link between two dissimilar objects: the war-torn city and a woman bereft[86] of her husband. Similes introduced by the Hebrew *ke* are translated as 'like' or 'as', so *ke'almānāh* triggers a comparison of the devastation of a war-torn city with the feelings of abandonment of an aNE widow. Soskice (1985:59) points out that while simile and metaphor are textually different, functionally they are the same. Petersen and Richards citing Belin (1992:50) note that: 'it is but a small step from simile to metaphor'. Simile does not have the effect of shock or surprise that metaphor can have. In this instance the similarities in the experience of both the *'almānāh* and the city are drawn from the idea that individual and community equally face a change from their normal way of life. This symbolic image remains alive, active, fluidly expressible and at the same time remains inexpressible, unlike allegory where the concept becomes bound by the image (see Wellek 1981:211 for Goethe's argument).

[86] Bereaved comes from the old English word *bereafean* (725 CE) which means leave desolate, alone, rob and is applied to the loss of a loved one, *bereft* is applied to circumstances, especially in such phrases as *bereft of hope* (CDE).

The physical and emotional experiences of the widow-city are skilfully explored from yet another dual perspective: personally, through the body language of a widow in her grief and collectively through the damage of war on the physical nature and communal functioning of a city. In an intertextual and psychological context the *'almānāh* is mentioned throughout the Hebrew Bible (55 times) and is simply translated as 'widow' i.e. a woman who has lost her husband by death and has not married again. Hoffner (1974:287) posits that the *'almānāh* has 'a completely negative nuance. It means a woman who has been divested of her male protector', which not only means her spouse or partner, but could also mean her siblings and children. In this Biblical context she has been abandoned by her God *yhwh* and her community. The *'almānāh*, having no living relative and lacking money or influence, is often linked in the Hebrew Bible with orphans, the sojourner (or asylum-seeker), the hireling (or sweat-shop worker), the poor (or the unemployed) and the Levites (or voluntary workers). Van Leeuwen (1974:413-414) suggests that having no means of support, a creditor may take the widow's ox as a pledge, or 'take away her children or even her baby (Job 24:9), for using them later on as slaves'.

4.2 Role Reversals

The *'almānāh* has undergone a role reversal: in contrast to her previous status of freedom and secure social standing, prefigured as a princess among states, she is depicted as sitting enslaved in her grief (Lam. 1:1). By mourning for her dead she is ritually separated from the social round of daily life and the celebrations of temple worship. In the aNE setting of the Hebrew Bible royal princesses are said to be in favour with the king (Ps. 45:10). By way of stark contrast both textually and psychologically, the city once populated, i.e. 'great (*rabbaṯî*) with people' (Lam. 1:1), is now deserted (Lam. 1:4) and the princess among states, at one time 'great (*rabbaṯî*) among nations', has now lost her status and 'is become a thrall'. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:54, 74) draws attention to the *inclusio* formed by the contrast of the widow-city's past grandeur with the greatness of her present grief. The poem, which opens with the imagery of a lonely *'almānāh*, closes with 'my sighs are many' (*rabbôṯ* Lam. 1:22), as she is still overwhelmed by the feelings of emptiness. The widow-city imagery is thus strengthened on the textual strand through the build up of inviolability of the Zion image through the repetition of *rabbaṯî*, *rabbaṯî*, *rabbôṯ*, but by contrast, her status and power have been overthrown. The contrast between 'full' and 'empty',

a poignant theme, resonates intertextually with the tale of the three widows in the book of Ruth.[87]

Olyan (2004:59) and Anderson (1991:49) suggest that mourning and rejoicing run in parallel as ritual oppositions. In celebration and rejoicing the participants 'anoint themselves, to go to the sanctuary in festal attire, offer sacrifices and other offerings, eat, drink, sing songs of praise and dance', whereas mourners for the dead 'tear their garments, weep, sit on the ground, fast, wail and toss ashes or dust upon their heads' (2004:13). The poet is involved in mourning ritual, but also in a gradual transition from mourning rites to celebration rituals. It is this human process, which the poet so vividly captures through metaphorical imagery. The *'almānāh*'s shape and movement is traced in outline by the helix acting as a template for configuration and her survival is replicated 'through the agency of the human reader'.[88]

An earlier exploration of the acrostic structure demonstrated that the experience of lament or grief does not follow a logical or linear pattern. It is not predictable and cannot be allocated to neat stages. In order to be able to discuss grief some specific aspects of patterns, cries and images are pinpointed on the helix model. The idea of movement is based on Ricoeur's interpretative process of prefiguration-configuration-refiguration. In the text of Lamentations 1 the aspect of loneliness in grief is fore-grounded, as the metaphorical *'almānāh* remembers past times (prefiguration), acknowledges the present loneliness and loss of status in grief (configuration) and tries to find a way of coping with, or adapting to her new circumstances (refiguration). As she acts out what has happened during a disastrous event, the *'almānāh* behaves in a recognisably human way, thus inviting the reader to respond by sitting with her in understanding and compassion.[89] She looks for order and rhythm in her repetitive experiences of grief, as she moves beyond old boundaries and builds new ones.

[87] Naomi leaves Bethlehem (House of Bread) during a time of famine (Ruth 1:1), but her memory of the situation was that she was full (Ruth 1:21), but she blames *yhwh* for her feelings of bitterness and emptiness. However, curiously the word *'almānāh* is missing from the text of Ruth.

[88] Pyper (1998:73) discusses how DNA as a 'template' and a 'survival machine' reflects in copies of the whole text of the Bible. This thesis uses the helix as a 'template' or model to demonstrate the importance of Lamentations as a whole book on the survival of grief. The focus is on the whole setting: the uncomfortable situation of the *'almānāh* in Lamentations 1 as well as the more hopeful stanzas of the *geber* in Lamentations 3.

[89] Soskice (1985:11) makes the point that the aim of such models it not to provide information, but rather to call forth and direct response, as it concerns the human condition rather than a transcendent referent.

Readers are included in the *'almānāh* experience, as by *mimesis*[90] they also express grief through loneliness in this transitional state. Through metaphorical representation the reader is shown what is going on in the widow's inner thoughts and emotions by her external actions. Readers have the option to join the company of isolated *'almānāh*s, which become a community of *'almānôṯ* [91] (Lam. 5:3 see 8.4).

Questions are raised which lead to experiences of change, as there is movement towards recovery. These patterns can be a basis for the acknowledgement of aspects of grief across time and culture.[92] The widow who sits as a bereaved person often needs 'someone who will be able to sit and listen' (Backer et al. 1982:259) to her fragmented human story of life, death, and survival. Since movement can take place either backwards or forwards in the experience of grief along the helix, there is no sense of imposition of a time-scale or programme whilst coping with loss and disaster. Experiences of grief can thus be repeated or missed out according to the needs of the community or the individual. For an example of emotions in grief, Archer (1999:13) quotes Charles Darwin: 'the sufferer sits motionless, or gently rocks to and fro; the circulation becomes languid; respiration is almost forgotten, and deep sighs are drawn'.[93]

It is also the world-view from which the reader associates a known and experienced estrangement through grief and loss in an initial, somewhat naïve, glimpse of the *'almānāh*. This reference to the familiar pre-understanding of the order of action we have as human beings (Stiver 2001:58) is what Ricoeur calls prefiguration (1984:xi, 64). As discussed previously, configuration of lament/grief could start with a cry of grief as in *êkāh,* or an argued plea for justice as in *'ănî ... 'ŏnî,* or in a lament pattern

[90] Ricoeur (1984:32-3) describes mimesis as an active process of imitating or representing something: a dynamic sense of transposition into representative works. I also use the word 'rapprochement' for this process also explained in 1.4.1 and 7.4.

[91] Worden (1983:84) cites how widows are helped to adapt to the loss of their loved one through a volunteer bereavement counselling service of widow-widow programmes.

[92] Stanley (1990:170) suggests the definition: 'culture is an integrated system of beliefs, of value, of customs, and of institutions which express these beliefs, values and customs, which binds a society together and gives a sense of identity, dignity, security and continuity'. Carroll (1998:47) cites Bohannan's (1995:47) definition of culture as 'a set of common understandings, manifest in act and artifact. It is in two places at once: inside somebody's head as understandings and in the external environment as act and artifact'.

[93] Archer and Darwin in their research into the expression of emotion in grief note: 'As soon as the sufferer is fully conscious that nothing can be done, despair or deep sorrow takes the place of frantic grief'.

zəkōr … habbeṭ ûrə'ēh. Ricoeur's hermeneutic, as shown on the helix (Figure 2 p.29) searches for order and dynamic living through 'configuration', which by means of an explanation and understanding of the imagery of the text develops a new horizon where change takes place.

The two hermeneutical strands are drawn together. The 'Textual Strand' of the metaphorical *'almānāh*, as she cries *'êkāh* and sits apart, matches the 'Psychological Strand' of the feelings of isolation and abandonment. Archer (1999:1) describes this rapprochement succinctly:

> grief can be described as a natural human reaction since it is a universal feature of human existence irrespective of culture, although the form and intensity its expression takes varies considerably.

Ricoeur (2003:251) points out that 'seeing as' is the positive link between tenor and vehicle, it is exposed through reading and 'is the intuitive relationship that makes the sense and image hold together': it is 'half thought and half experience'. He cites Aldrich as saying: 'thinking in poetry is a picture-thinking'. Ricoeur adds that this pictorial capacity of language consists also in 'seeing an aspect'. There is recognition of the strong similarities between the picture of the devastating exposure of a city that no longer has a commercial or religious core, and the image of the vulnerability of a lonely widow, as she has lost her social status and family support. Alice Laffy (1990:200) depicts her as 'a woman once pregnant and filled with children', but now as a widow, she is 'barren and withered; she is bereft of husband and offspring; she is alone'. Hiebert (1993:796-8) explains that the status of the aNE *'almānāh* has 'a more specific meaning in the Biblical texts than the English word [widow] conveys'. The kinship-based patriarchal society meant that, when a woman married, a contract was made between two families rather than two individuals, so she was passed from the authority of her father's household to the authority of her husband's household. This meant that when her husband died, if she had no other male relative who would take her under his authority, as an *'almānāh* she became excluded from the normal social structure. The *'almānāh* then becomes an image, a picture which is seen as a symbol of grief and mourning not only in the Hebrew Bible, but also in other aNE

texts as discussed in 3.2.2 and 3.3.1 and is more than a symbol that stays fixed in the aNE (4.4).

The role reversal of the widow-city and her situation of isolation in grief are being treated seriously, so that platitudes of future hope or rationalised answers are being resisted. The social casework in the grief therapy of Simos (1977, cited in Backer et al. 1982:259) suggests that:

> repetition is necessary for the mastery of grief and loss. The bereaved require repeated opportunities to verbalise their feelings in an attempt to make sense of their loss, to ask the unanswerable [why] before the acceptance of loss can occur.

The widow and her metonyms of stance for status, voice for complaint, hands for resistance, and eyes for weeping reflect loneliness and isolation, not only in the imagery of the text, but also cross-culturally in human psychological responses in grief today.

4.2.1 *Yāšḇāh ḇāḏāḏ*: Sitting Apart or Settled?

The first three words 'sits lonely the city' (Lam. 1:1 TAN, KJV) are striking, as they become an oxymoron in the sense that the city suggests a community of people actively working together, but is paradoxically qualified by inactivity and isolation. Marris (1974:28) suggests that:

> the bereaved may be desperately lonely, yet shun company; they may try to escape from reminders of their loss, yet cultivate memories of the dead; they complain if people avoid them, embarrassed about how to express their sympathy, yet rebuff that sympathy irritably when it its offered.[94]

The Hebrew word order puts the verb 'sits' (*yāšḇāh*)[95] in first place. Conjugated with the suffix *-āh*, there is an indication that the stanza is in the third person feminine

[94] Marris (in Backer et al.1982:251-252) adds that 'grief is a process through which the bereaved must go if they are to become whole persons again. It is a time of great ambivalence. The ambivalence comes from a desire to return to the past, yet to reach out to the future. During a period of grief the present may be meaningless'. Thus, the helix shape is very suited to this kind of flux and yet it does not depart from the grief process. Likewise, the metaphorical *'almānāh* reinforces the need for the bereaved to be ritually 'set apart' or 'sit' in a visual and active change of stance.

[95] The prime root means to dwell, inhabit, sit, abide, or remain.

singular, thus synthesising the widow and the city. The adverb *bādād* is in second place and means alone, solitary. With verbs of dwelling it means isolation or separation, for example of a leper (Lev. 13:46), or the blessing of a people who dwell apart, in Balaam's oracle (Num. 23:9). Isolation from others can also be interpreted positively as *yhwh*'s protection, a sense of deuteronomic safety, or freedom from attack (Deut. 33:28, Mic. 7:14). Again there is the idea of regal separateness and yet there is also the need for companionship and the political power of alliances. Conversely, for a woman in this aNE setting, the observation of separation for bathing, ritual washing and purification, known as *niddāh*[96] (Lam. 1:9) was also very important. The metaphorical *'almānāh* demonstrates an uncertainty in the meaning of loneliness and isolation.

The prophet Jeremiah in a setting of grief, like the *'almānāh*, weeps in the night. He withdraws from normal life during a particular period of emotional and spiritual suffering to ask probing theological questions in the form of a lament (Jer. 15:17). Similarly, in the Christian New Testament, Jesus withdraws from the public arena of ministry to a private place of prayer at times of great sorrow and grief. For example, when he heard the news of the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 14:13), he went to 'a desert place apart'; before his own betrayal and arrest he distanced himself from his disciples, as he agonised in prayer (Lk. 22:41). Some readers, such as Rabbi Eliezer, grieve over the separation of Israel in the destruction of the second Temple because 'the gates of prayer were closed, and only those of tears were still open' (Neusner 1994:10), whilst others like Rabbi Akiba believe that God shares in Israel's exile.[97]

In accordance with the Talmudic Jewish laws on mourning,[98] the *'almānāh* sits in mourning as part of the seven days of mourning following the funeral. In the same

[96] De Lange (2000:94) explains that a woman is called a *niddāh* when she is in a state of ritual impurity (*niddāh*), such as during menstruation and for seven days after menstruation (Lev. 18:19, 15:19-31) and after giving birth (Lev. 12).

[97] Neusner expands this idea of faith renewed: 'God suffers literal and radical powerlessness. Unless the God of history is to be abandoned, only a prayer remains, addressed to divine Power, but spoken softly lest it be heard'.

[98] Linafelt (2000a:22) and De Lange (2000:116-7) give the laws as follows: Day 1 there is total mourning, which involves complete inaction, even non-being. All positive *mitzvot* (commandments) are abolished, but negative laws such as 'do not kill', are not abolished. The sages understood that in the presence of the dead nothing could be said or done. During a period of 7 days (*shivah*), the person in mourning is nearly inactive i.e. remains at home, and sits on a low stool. For a period of 30 days (*Shloshim*) mourners refrain from shaving and having their hair cut; they do not listen to music or

way Joseph solemnly observed seven days of mourning for his father Jacob (Gen 50:10), and Job and his three friends sit silently as emblematic of a departure from the normal way of life (Job 2:8, 13). Citations of the Hebrew Bible of women carrying out mourning rituals for Israel's cities, such as Jerusalem, are comparable with similar Egyptian texts and laments of Babylonia's Ur and Sumer. Bremmer and Van Den Bosch (1999:682, 1029) suggest that widows in religions all over the world are often treated as distinct from married women, because of their socio-economic disadvantage and sexual ambivalence. There seems to be a joining of the textual *'almānāh* with the psychological widow's display of grief through the metaphoric imagery of 'sitting apart'. Withdrawal at a time of grief could also be misconstrued as a form of avoidance if it were not accepted as a healthy way of expressing grief in the early period of loss.

Cultural customs demonstrate the symbolism of separation by drawing attention to the widow's grief through her physical appearance, such as the shaving of the head as in some Brahmin castes, or the wearing of unwashed clothes as in some African people groups. Archer (1999:112) explains this prolonging of grief as 'a particular coping style which involves the person constantly dwelling on the loss and its implications'. He also suggests that 'it is an extremely loss-oriented strategy … it is ineffective in resolving grief because there is no progression'. This certainly may be the case in sudden, unexplained or traumatic deaths, or the death of a child. Archer (1999:13) goes on to explain that in such cases the difficulties of non-acceptance of the event set up 'an alternating cycle of uncontrollable memories and extreme avoidance'. Parkes (1972:60) suggests that 'people can move back and forth through phases so that years after bereavement, the discovery of a photograph in a drawer or a visit from an old friend can evoke another episode of pining'. Parkes (1972:27) distinguishes between the loss of a thing such as an umbrella and the loss of a person. The loss of a person involves not only the loss of various roles that that person performed, but also other possible related forms of deprivation, such as loss of income, change of job, house-move and the bereavement of children and other members of the family.

---

attend weddings or parties. Annually, the date of death is commemorated, by lighting a memorial candle and reciting the *Kaddish.*

Although funerals are regarded as the special domain of women in the aNE and in some areas such as Lebanese villages today, there is nevertheless a strange ambivalence of courage and defeat in the idea of the funeral pyre. To some it is a heroic deed as portrayed in verse in *Beowulf*:

> …. People from far and wide should fetch wood
> for the hero's funeral pyre.
> Now the flames shall grow dark
> ….Black wood-smoke
> arose from the blaze, and roaring of flames
> mingles with weeping.
> A woman of the Geats in grief sang out
> the lament for his death. Loudly she sang …
>
> (Alexander 2003:110-113 lines 3110-1, 3141-3, 3147-8)

To others in the Hindu rite of *suttee* there is a conflict of both virtuous bravery and victimisation, as the widow draws apart from society in such a definitive way, that she burns herself on the burning funeral pyre of her deceased husband. In the Hindu *dharma* a woman never 'has a thread of her own', she is not her own mistress, so she may elect to offer her bodily life to a 'higher reality'.[99] However, as Parkes (1972:29) reminds us, in western culture 'we do not burn our widows we pity and avoid them'. This could be so even today through poor understanding, the embarrassment of not knowing what to say, or not wishing to be faced with death and its implications. Parkes (1972:28) cites Cochrane's (1936) description of the taboo placed on the bereaved among the Shuswap people of British Colombia:

> Widows and widowers in mourning are secluded and forbidden to touch their own bodies; the cups and cooking vessels, which they use may be used by no one else. … No hunter comes near such mourners, for their presence is unlucky …

Cochrane also observes that the Agutainos of Polawan find the presence of a widow dangerous:

[99] See Zaehner (1980:111-112) 'The lady who sacrificed herself was known as *sati* [Anglo-Indian *suttee*] a real or true woman one who sacrificed bodily life to a higher reality'. Swinton (2007:98-99) suggests that for Christians 'Jesus suffering on the cross was not romantic and heroic but real and terrible. His suffering had no earthly merit; he was rejected, humiliated and scorned. There was no honour'.

> She may only go out at an hour when she is unlikely to meet anyone, for whoever sees her is thought to die a sudden death. To prevent this she knocks with a wooden peg on the trees as she goes along, warning people of her presence. It is believed that the very trees on which she knocks will soon die.

The metaphorical *'almānāh*, or cross-culturally the 'person in liminality', reacts in different ways to loneliness and the absence of essential supplies of psychological food and drink. At a time of deprivation there may be a desire to hurry out of the slowed-down time of grief and the limitations of this life of separation. It is interesting that at times of revolution, war and reformation there is a tendency to interpret the Lamentations text allegorically by focusing on the comfort and peace of the life hereafter in an escape from the present suffering. However, in Islamic,[100] Jewish[101] and Christian[102] tradition God pitied the widows in their poverty and thus the responsibility was placed on the community to take care of them both socially and financially. The idea that the *'almānāh* sat in God's presence and had a hearing made her prayers especially effective. So the *'almānāh*, as she sits alone, is still an oxymoron both textually and psychologically. She is singled out as a person who needs special care, but at the same time she is isolated and rejected from the community. As the aNE *'almānāh* sits apart in her respect for the dead she becomes a symbol of the isolation of grief, but there is a further question: where are her friends, do they comfort her in her loneliness and protect her from her enemies?

4.2.2 Broken Engagements: Friends or Enemies?

Emphasis is placed on the fact that the *'almānāh*'s enemies prosper whilst at the same time it is *yhwh* who is treating her badly. There is a halting, breath-taking moment in the unnatural pause caused by an interruption in the metrical flow of the poem in Lam. 1:7 translated by Watson (2005:333) as:

> Saw her, did the enemies: mocked
> At her sorry state

[100] 'Marry the spouseless among you, and your slaves and handmaidens that are righteous; if they are poor, God will enrich them of His bounty' (*The Koran* XIV 'The Light' p. 356). *Khadija bint khuwaylid*, who was the Prophet *Muhammed*'s first wife, became a widow, with an inherited fortune from her husband. For more information on her life, see Esposito (1999:25) and Mernissi (1991:116).
[101] The Lord … keeps the widow's boundaries intact (Prov. 15:25 NIV). Do not oppress the widow … (Zech. 7:10 NIV).
[102] 'religion … is this to look after orphans and widows'. (Jas. 1:27 NIV).

The above is a good example of enjambment, where two lines of poetry are straddled by one single grammatical line. Watson (2005:333) continues to explain that there is an unnatural break after the word 'mocked' caused by the poetic *qînâ* metre of 3 + 2 'over-running' into the next colon: the natural grammatical division comes after 'enemies'. This variance creates tension between meter and grammar, but at the same time brings the poetry nearer to everyday speech, so that the reader sees the variation in the text. My observation is that the elegant form of the poem representing the regular pattern of life has been interrupted and energised by the disturbing overflow of disaster in the content of the lyric. This is seen clearly in the imagery of the *'almānāh*, as she keeps the rituals of bereavement, but also goes against the flow by breaking through rigid social boundaries.

Not only is life over-run by irregularities such as this, but it is also a time of extremity, what Mudge (Ricoeur 1980:36) calls a 'fraudulent totalization'[103] of the *'almānāh*'s being, by both friends and foes. This is indicated by the double use of the word 'all' (*kol* Lam. 1.2), where there is none to comfort her from all her friends and likewise all her allies have become her foes. *Kol* appears seven times in the acrostic of Psalm 34 where, as a key word it develops the two-stranded theme of thanksgiving and instruction. Again at the end of the poem (Lam. 1:22), the *'almānāh* wants *yhwh* to deal with all the wrong-doings of her enemies in the same way that he has treated all her transgressions. Through the antithesis of word pairs and the repetition of the word *kol*,[104] the vision of the world of the princess has totally changed to become the world of the *'almānāh*, a widow and a task-worker (Lam. 1:1). Friends turn and become enemies, foes invert and take control, precious things of high value are lost, children are abandoned, the city is polluted and people feel psychologically worthless. However, an *inclusio* (1:12, 22) brings the problem full circle from evil to hope, as the *'almānāh* who suffers all the agony dealt to her, wants complete vengeance and asks

[103] Mudge explains that the fact of evil threatens the fulfilment of hope. 'What may we hope?' 'Symbols of regeneration' must be at work in the 'productive imagination'. Ricoeur (1975:45) suggests that narratives and symbols, which represent the victory of the Good Principle over the Evil Principle, are not expendable.

[104] *kol* occurs 32 times in the first four lyrics and 16 times in the first lyric. Stahl (1995:31) draws attention to the idea of inclusiveness in the repeated use of 'every' or 'all' (*kol*) and 'the momentum built by the incremental repetition of *kol* until all of creation having been assembled in the mandate, God takes one last all-encompassing view and finds it "very good"' (Gen. 1:1-2.4a, 2:4b-24). In Lamentations, the repetition also builds up in an increasing form of 'de-creation', where the experience is still total but instead it is chaotic and excluding and causes the *'almānāh* to plead with *yhwh*.

for all her enemies to be given the same thorough treatment. She does not want to remain alone in her suffering, she wants others to identify with her in her grief. The dynamic movement of Ricoeur's philosophy looks for the possible in the impossible, for what 'might be' (Vanhoozer 1990:57). This could also be an attempt to gain identification with others; an effort at social levelling, another way of coping with broken engagements and the rupture of the rhythm of life.

In some cultures[105] death is a public event, which involves the public display of emotion by the whole of the community to which one belongs. In other cultures, death is viewed as a private event and people may resort to strategies that distance themselves from death, denying public grief, even regarding death as a failure to perpetuate life. Harrison (in Warwick 2003:40) encapsulates this idea of denial in these lines in his poem of remembrance 'Long Distance':

> Though my mother was already two years dead
> Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas,
> Put hot water bottles her side of the bed
> And still went to renew her transport pass.

The textual *'almānāh*, does not stay in 'denial', but searches for restored status, renewed relationships and re-engagement with community. She is still experiencing feelings of total abandonment, not only by family, friends, and community, but also by *yhwh*. This becomes evident particularly when reminders of loss come round with painful regularity during festivals or times of celebration. Because of her broken relationships, there are unfilled gaps during Sabbaths or holidays and lonely silence on special anniversaries of the year.

4.3 The Emptiness of Religious Festivals

Configuration on the 'Textual Strand' is prompting readers to visualise the empty streets and identify with the desolate gates, to feel the loss of pleasant things, to

[105] In Parkes, Laungani and Young (1997:218-9) it is suggested that, for countries such as India Nepal, China, Pakistan and Greece and many of the small group societies, the disposal of the dead, and the accompanying mourning, becomes a social affair which involves crying, weeping, sobbing and wailing in public. Whereas the northern European countries such as Britain, America and Scandinavia view death as a private event and funerals as ceremonies, which proceed with restraint, in a quiet and what is seen as a dignified manner.

experience the constant misery and lack of hope. The city's legal, commercial and religious communication structure has disappeared through the oppression of the exile, giving an air of redundancy and hopelessness for the minority who are left behind. A sense of community no longer exists in the streets, besides which there is no bread (1:11) for the celebration of special feasts and festivals. Gapping occurs in the text, since wine is not even mentioned, and psychologically, gladness is absent. The characteristic joy of religious worship: the noise of the national community of festival pilgrims as they 'walked with the crowd … the festive throng … the House of God … the nostalgic joyous shouts of praise' (Ps. 42:5) have all faded to memories. The *'almānāh* is experiencing the absence of friendship, but as Francis Bacon (1561-1626) writes: 'crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love'. Ironically, therefore, the widow seeks isolation at a time of mourning, because it would be inappropriate to attend festivals. Yet there is a yearning (Table 2 p.25: Bowlby) for what used to be, for the wine and happiness of celebration. The poet uses textual juxtaposition to express the emotion of public grief through past memories of special communal events. The absence of people, loss of culture and meaninglessness of religion in the presence of death and the exile of the people to Babylon are contrasted in this stark analogy.

There are no people travelling on Zion's roads, no one found at Jerusalem's gates to exchange commercial deals, discuss the law, or enjoy religious festivals. The intensity builds as the *'almānāh* is made desolate (*šōmēmāh* 1:13),[106] her gateways are desolate (*šōmēmîn* 1:4) and her children are destitute (*šōmēmîn* 1:16). The enemy mocks at her Sabbaths (Lam. 1:7). The weekly regularity of events reminds the *'almānāh* over and over again that for her such religious days have no meaning when *yhwh* is absent. Seidman (1994:278-88),[107] who was raised in an orthodox Jewish

[106] The translations 'desolate' and 'destitute' are from the NIV Bible. Morla (2004:114) suggests that the root *smm,* from which the adjective 'desolate' is derived, can be legitimately applied to cities and territories as well as to people. From a territorial and communal aspect there is a sense of emptiness both archeologically and materially as the city is left devoid of its contents and its potential growth.

[107] Seidman explains her objection to man's distaste for women that she sees in the poet's imagery and says: 'I take offense the way a woman might grab a robe to cover herself'. Guest (1999:413) makes the point that 'hiding behind a woman's figure is nothing new'. I argue that the *'almānāh* is in a special position to be seen and heard by the community and *yhwh* and also by the reader, but there will be issues to reflect upon. Provan (1991:58) raises the problem of the narrator's seemingly simple equation between suffering and sin, but the *'almānāh*, as we shall see later in the text, does raise her hands and voice in protest. De Lange (2000:147) adds that joyful prayers are omitted, darkness reigns and the

household, remembers accompanying her mother to the synagogue on the Ninth of *Av*. In the synagogue there is an air of gloom, dirges are sung and the book of Lamentations (*'êkāh*) is chanted to a mournful melody. She recollects that during the liturgy:

> … my own spine is rigid with insult and distance, my thighs clenched with the usual impotent rage … as she instinctively attempts to physically insulate her body against the disturbing images as *'êkāh* is read.

Seidman and other readers, like the *'almānāh* in the text, have a physical and emotional response to the public display of the horrors of war and injustice in the text. They are bold enough to protest against such abuse of women in what Seidman describes as an unchallenged, male-dominated, religious tradition. Pyper (2001:56, 68-9)[108] describes the text as 'violation of the inner sanctuary, the most secret places, paradoxically exposing them to view in the ostensible act of expressing outrage'. Provan (1990:133)[109] on the other hand, argues from the epistemological angle of the poet's creativity and imagination rather than from an eyewitness experience. The image of grief, set in the extremity of war and suffering, is reinforced, enhanced and sustained through textual imagery and poetic association of ideas through religious ceremony. The freshness of poetry allows time for silence and space to speak out against injustice. The vivid imagery portrays energy in a search for someone to blame, just as the *'almānāh* does, and later, likewise the *bat̲-ṣiyyôn.*

4.4 Defiant Complaints from the Margins

Throughout the poem the *'almānāh*'s voice is heard as she alternately blames others, herself and God.[110] She repeatedly pleads with her people's God, only to accuse him of betrayal, rejection and maltreatment, in this painful context of exile. By use of the imperative of the verb, she asks others 'to behold', 'to see' (1:9, 20 cf. *ḥerpāt̲ēnû* and

---

worshippers, like mourners, avoid sitting on chairs. The *tallit* and *tefillin* are not put on in the morning of the Ninth of *Av*.

[108] Pyper argues that reading Lamentations is best understood as a deeply shaming text and thus potentially a salutary shock to the reader in recognition of his or her own complicity in the psychology of destruction. I develop this aspect of shame through the imagery of *bat̲-ṣiyyôn* in the next chapter.

[109] Provan has questioned the assumption that it is an eyewitness account: 'It is clear … that the "freshness" and "vividness" of the poem may have more to tell us abut the creativity and imagination of the author than about when he lived'.

[110] Lam. 1:5 blame; 1:9 plead; 1:11 plead; 1:12 blame God, plead with the people; 1:14 blame; 1:15 twice – blame, 1:17 blame; 1:18 confession; 1:20 plead.

special class of women', who can 'play the harlot' without being condemned. She is on the margins, in what the anthropologist Victor Turner (Camp 1985:113) refers to as a *liminal* state: 'being betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, and convention, and ceremonial'. Turner explains further that *liminal* people [such as the *'almānāh*] 'elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space'. Outside the rules of these two categories the *'almānāh* becomes a threat to social order. Camp (1985:113) and Niditch (1979:144) explore the idea of whether a young woman has predominantly two roles. Is the *'almānāh,* in a temporary state socially as illustrated in Figure 8 in Richard Redgrave's painting of 'The Governess' (1844), where having received bad news, she too sits alone with tears on her cheek?

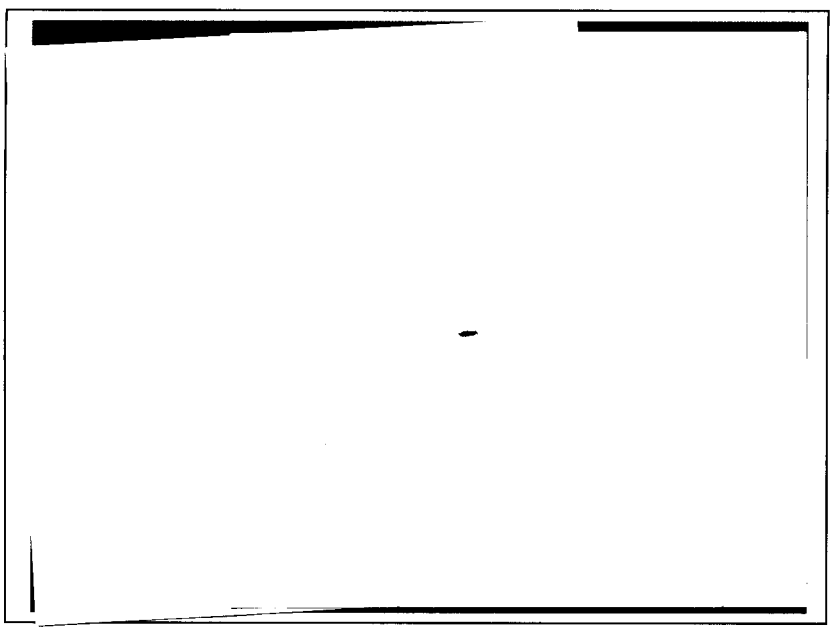


Figure 8 The Governess

The governess is uncomforted in her upset, because in her context she has been sent away from home to earn money. She is, therefore, no longer surrounded by her own family, she does not have a husband to support her, neither does she belong to the family of the three girls in the background for whom she is a governess, nor does she form part of the group of servants who wait on the family. She is alone in her grief, isolated and she too is in a *liminal* state. On the other hand, there is an expectation that others will speak on behalf of the *'almānāh* (or even for the Governess), just as Boaz did for Ruth 'the foreigner from Moab' in her context of *'almānāh* in Israel. The impulse of the helix is, therefore, not passive, nor is it restricted to a cognitive or a

zəkōr … habbeṭ ûrə'ēh in Lam. 5:1) not in any casual or disinterested manner, but requesting on-going consideration through the causative action of commitment and involvement. She addresses all who pass along the road and by implication, all who hear the *'almānāh*'s cry through the text of Lamentation 1, or are in any way involved with feelings of abandonment and loneliness. In a double imperative: 'Behold and see!' (1:12), in her grief she is requesting her fellow human beings to pause in what they are doing, to stop their daily round and let their rhythm of life stand still in order to take time to look round about them.

The *'almānāh*'s voice grows more insistent, as her troubles are dialogued in staccato fashion. Despite her apparent silencing by others the *'almānāh* has a voice and speaks out to God and to the community. C.W. Miller (2001) suggests, in an interpretation of the 'double-voiced' discourse of Lamentations 1, that there is a to-and-fro engagement which 'includes other voices from other times'. This productively provokes an on-going dialogue, not only of the two voices of the third person/narrator with the first person of the personified Jerusalem herself within the text, but also 'among the speakers within the poem and the readers who stand outside of it'. The *'almānāh* is widening her circle of listeners. In her role as widow-city and in her desperate state, she cries for justice and mercy. I am suggesting that to hear the voice of suffering and to draw aside to be with those who are abandoned takes time and vitality. This is documented in the work done by Biblical scholars, such as O'Connor, Lee and Mandolfo in their intertextual and cross-cultural work on Lamentations, and research by grief scholars such as Kübler-Ross, Bowlby, Parkes and Archer.

There is scope for wider interpretation if the reader listens to the two 'independent and unmerged voices, and consciousnesses'. The *'almānāh*'s direct speech in her aNE setting of exile is demonstrating Israel's multifaceted experience of women and male-female relationships. She is suffering as an *'almānāh*, rejected from society. Niditch (1979:144) and Camp (1985:113)[111] explain that she is neither 'an unmarried virgin in her father's home', nor is she 'a faithful, child-producing wife in her husband's or husband's family home'. Once outside the rules, she belongs to 'a

[111] Niditch (in Camp) suggests that it is expected that a bride in this social order make a clean transition between these two categories. Simply stated a young woman is allowed only two proper roles.

predictable process, which of itself as Fish (1980) explains further, could 'block or impair the important release of impulses' in the register of human emotional and physical experience.

However, there is another side to the *'almānāh* and her community, which may cause feelings of guilt, or reticence, to surface, since she seems to be in a situation of disgrace and desecration. Kübler-Ross (1989:4, 34, 43) suggests in her survey on the response of widows in grief, that the survivor may feel responsible for the death of a spouse and feel that they will have to die a pitiful death in retribution. This may help to understand some of the customs and rituals that have been perpetuated over the centuries. For the *'almānāh* in the aNE text, her religious impurity clings to her skirts, maybe because she is sitting down in the dust of grief and in touch with death, or possibly she is deemed as unclean because of personal menstruation (Lev. 15:19-33). Her widow's clothing[112] becomes symbolic of a status change. It is pertinent to note that in some groups of African peoples a widow does not wash for about one year after the death of her husband, possibly as a sign of rejection, but a lack of cleanliness will also result in her being isolated. The *'almānāh* in Lamentations is considered unclean and is precluded from taking part in any holy ceremony. This might also account for her separateness in the Hebrew religious context. She is both rejected by the community and therefore not listened to, but at the same time *yhwh*, who is seemingly absent, has decreed that it is the responsibility of those around her to comfort her. As a widow she has lost her husband and it could be posited that *yhwh* is her husband. It is also possible that his absence and silence have caused her grief and, in turn to some extent, has silenced her. This seems to me to be a maddeningly incongruous situation. It is even worse than that, the *'almānāh* has not only lost her husband, but the children she might have had in the future by him. She is now reliant on others speaking for her.

Parkes (1972) suggests that 'the pining or yearning which constitutes separation anxiety is the characteristic feature of the pang of grief' (in Littlewood 1992:53). The first reader expectation may have been that other family members and social contacts

[112] See also the discussion on garments in 8.5.3.

would protect her. In the Hebrew Bible[113] and in the New Testament[114] there is clear provision made for the *'almānāh*/*chera* to be included within the confines of the family and by the community, so that she could re-marry, have family and have somewhere to live. Her posterity could be continued and the defiant complaint could be heard. The 'levirate marriage' (Deut. 25:5-10)[115] in the aNE context depended on a relative, usually a brother of the deceased, undertaking an obligation to give his dead brother an heir. This had many problems. An example of such a case was Onan (Gen. 38:8-11),[116] who performed his duty by law and married his brother's wife Tamar,[117] but she did not have children by him, because he did not want to share his inheritance with his brother's family. Instead, because Tamar's father-in-law Judah hesitated to provide another brother as husband for Tamar, she tricked him into becoming a levir himself. However, Judah, having performed his duty as levir did not consider Tamar as his wife. The story of Ruth follows a similar pattern notes Belkin (1970:284):

> the *go'el* (redeemer), like Onan refused to fulfil his duty as levir. Ruth, like Tamar, endeavoured secretly to make her kinsman perform the duty of a levir. In both instances the levirate duty failed to be performed by the person who was first in line to do so.

The *'almānāh* in Lamentations 1, however, does not give up or gloss over the problem; she voices her complaint encouraging the reader to listen and empathise;

---

[113] e.g. Ex. 22:22; Deut. 10:18; Pss. 68:5, 146:9; Isa. 9.17; Jer. 7:6; Ezek. 22:7; Zech. 7:10.
[114] e.g. Lk. 7:12-13, 18:5, 21:2; Acts 6:1; 1Tim. 5:3,16; Jas. 1:27.
[115] Biblical law provided for re-marriage for a woman of childbearing age, so that she as an *'almānāh* was cared for and so that a child could be produced to inherit her husband's estate. However, that depended on whether the relative was willing to undertake the obligation, which may cause a diminution in his own inheritance.
[116] Levirate marriage sets out to continue the family name and keep the ancestral property within the family. However, in practice it is difficult for the levirate father to establish a successful blood relationship with the dead brother's heir, since the offspring would be his brother's child not his. There is a strange irony between the Jewish social setting, where posterity is to be preserved by a levirate husband, but the outcome is wastage of the husband's seed (Gen. 38:9), and the western secular social setting where the husband is absent, but the sperm is scientifically preserved. Parkes (1972:30) suggests that although levirate marriage may not have solved the problem of mourning, nevertheless, it must have ensured that many of the essential needs of the widow were met, such as loneliness, poverty, rolelessness, sexual frustration, and absence of security.
[117] Huddelstun (2002:61) explains that in the Tamar story the removal of her widow's garb and the covering of her face with a veil deceived Judah into thinking that she was a prostitute was a scheme in order to obtain a child. The restricted status of levirate widowhood was temporarily discarded by Tamar because as Gunn and Fewell (1993:38) comment: 'the exercise of her sexuality could give her status which, he [Judah] has effectively denied her'. Tamar is also an example of liminal state and illustrates the symbolism of widow's clothing.

still acting in protest she spreads out her hands as she reaches out to others in her on-going dilemma.

4.5 *yâd* and *kaph*: Hands Lifted Up

A well-known Egyptian motif in Amarna art was the sun-disc, the *Aten*, believed to be the giver of life and whose rays were extended in blessing and terminated in hands (Lurker 1980:57). Hands in the Hebrew Bible are also a symbol of power. During the dramatic cycle of plagues in Egypt under Pharaoh's oppression, Moses, despite his speech inadequacy, says to the Pharaoh 'I shall spread out my hands to the Lord, the thunder will cease and the hail will fall no more' to show the power of *yhwh* (Ex. 9:29, 33). At the time of the dedication of the temple, King Solomon 'spread the palms of his hands toward heaven' (1 Kgs. 8:22) in representation of the people before *yhwh* in anticipation of the fulfilment of the two-way promise of devotion and forgiveness between *yhwh* and the community. Ezra, in grief over the impending invasion by Assyria, still in his torn garment and robe, also spreads out his hands in prayer to *yhwh* (Ezra 9:5). *Yhwh*'s character is 'the existing one' who is 'the same', but he is also 'the becoming', in the creativity of relationship. The *'almānāh*, thus spreads out her hands in prayer to bridge the distance experienced in her feeling of aloneness, just as the ancient Egyptian women would smite their hands, beat their flesh, and dishevel their hair (Lurker 1980:82) as a sign of mourning for the dead. In her abandonment the *'almānāh* stretches out her hands in the hope to engage the agreement that she will not be forgotten, since, through intertextual allusion, she is engraved on the palm of *yhwh*'s hands (Isa. 49:17).

Ironically, in what seems to be violation of any previous agreement of protection, the enemy, including *yhwh*, who is acting like an enemy, also spreads out his hands, but it is to desecrate her precious and sacred things (Lam. 1:4, 10). The primitive word root *yâd*[118] is used, meaning an open hand, indicating power, dominion and direction, rather than the word *kappayim*, which also implies power, but indicates hollow hands such as when clapping (Lam. 2:15). This unexpected use of the well-understood

[118] The image of the hand of God appears frequently in the Hebrew Bible. It exercises sanction against the people of Israel in judgement of their rebellion in the desert (Deut. 2:15), and it is against the nations in vengeance and punishment (Ezek. 25:13, 16). *yâd* represents the open hand of power in Lam. 1:7, 10, 14; 2:7, 8; 3:3; 5:8), the right hand (*yəmînô* Lam. 2:3, 4) rather than *kaph*, the closed hand of divine and social protection in Lam. 2:15, 19; 3:41; Ex. 33:22-3; Prov. 31:20.

symbol of the hand of *yhwh* could be the poet's way of raising issues of power and protection, rule and rape, suffering and sacrifice, for first readers, but also by implication, for all readers. The *'almānāh*'s personal and communal health is suffering, as she is in enemy hands and is seeking asylum. *Yhwh* not only allows this to happen (1:14), but his hands assist the process by imposing and lashing tight on her neck, national, moral and religious burdens for the whole community.

Nevertheless, the *'almānāh* finds energy to raise her hands and arms in protest against her accusers and abusers; to briefly admit her own guilt, but at the same time to call down revenge on others. The *'almānāh*'s experience of opposition and hand-to-hand resistance links intertextually with *yhwh*, as he acts with a 'mighty hand and outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power' (Deut. 26:8 NRSV) not only to deliver from slavery, but conversely to hand over to the Babylonians (Jer. 21:5).[119] The *'almānāh*'s outstretched hands and arms show willingness to suffer for the people. She leaves herself open to attack just as in the custom of some African peoples, when they greet each other they show that their hands and arms are weapon-free. Although she is feeling weak and vulnerable, nevertheless, she finds energy to reach out to others.[120] The loneliness of the *'almānāh* has been seen through the isolation of sitting apart, the abandonment of friends as they become enemies, and the absence of *yhwh*. She has responded through a voice of complaint, stretched out her hands and now this next paragraph will critically examine how her weeping eyes become the multi-cultural code and sign of grief.

4.6 *'Ênî 'ênî*: Weeping Eyes and Running Streams

The *'almānāh*'s eyes flow with tears (Lam. 1:16) as she looks back to her days of greatness as a princess, but also sees her present situation as a widow-city and her future prospects as a slave. By implication she engages the gaze of others so that the

[119] With 'God's mighty hand and outstretched arm' the Hebrew people were brought out of slavery (Deut. 26:8), but conversely the people were handed over to the Babylonians (Jer.21:5) by a God who also made the earth with his power (Jer. 27:5), and ruled with outpoured wrath (Ezek. 20:32-33). Jesus also combining power and compassion stretched out his hands to rescue his disciple Peter when he lacked faith and was sinking in the waves (Matt. 14:31). The imagery of crucifixion is also a very powerful figure of arms outstretched in weakness and in power as one person suffers for the people.

[120] See also Isa. 47:8-9, 54:4. Widowhood could be viewed as a punishment for both individual and collective moral misdemeanours (Isa. 47:8-9), but as Jonathan Sacks suggests in Neusner (1994:37), Jewish belief is that 'their history would seem to be more than the morally indifferent play of cause and effect'.

reader is drawn in to take a closer look at the silhouette of a woman who, in the style of the aNE, is a mourner for the dead. In poetic portrayal her face is framed with the black veil of the night, tears are on her cheeks (Lam. 1:2) and her eyes cannot shut out her ordeal, so her weeping is bitter and prolonged. Intertextually it is a reminder of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 8:21, 23), who identifies with and weeps for the exiled people:

> Because my people is shattered I am shattered;
> I am dejected, seized by desolation.
> Oh, that my head were water,
> My eyes a fount of tears!
> Then would I weep day and night
> For the slain of my people.

In a way that is both stereoscopic and three-dimensional, the metaphorical *'almānāh*, like Jeremiah the prophet, not only weeps for herself, but she also represents the grief of the people in the land of Judah. It is as if weeping allows the widow a detachment from her emotional agony, so that her tears give her some temporary relief. As grief builds up so weeping increases, but the fluid cameo is transformed before the readers' eyes into the *bat̲-ṣiyyôn* (Lam. 2:1) and the physical landscape of Judah, whose heart is poured out like water (Lam. 2:19) and whose tears gush forth like a torrent (Lam. 2:19). Then again the *geb̲er*'s eyes 'shed streams of water' and 'flow without cease' (Lam. 3:48-9, Ps. 119:136) in his plea to *yhwh*, but seemingly to no avail, as the *geb̲er* continues his complaint with: 'waters flowed over my head'. This act of linguistic fertility through water and tears is a curious link to the Egyptian view that the creation of humanity 'arose out of the creator's tears' (Beyerlin 1978:4), and with Gen. 2:10 where the river flowed out of Eden to water the garden. Conceptually and psychologically, through the key words of 'eyes', 'tears' and 'water' the reader moves back and forth between the various images on the strands of the hermeneutical helix.

Back to Lam. 1:4, the poet again moves on to conflate the city and the widow. The animated portrait of the weeping face of the lonely widow is changed into the inanimate, sad flat cameo of Zion's empty roads. The 'Textual Strand' and 'Psychological Strand' of the hermeneutical helix are appropriately synthesised in the 'Sumerian Lamentation on the destruction of Ur' by the phrase: 'in the city the wife

was abandoned' (Beyerlin 1978:118). The widow-city image draws together the personal and communal loss in the personification of the roads of Zion. The gaze of the reader is taken through metaphorical flexibility to a defeated city, whose vision is impaired because her eyes of understanding, just like Samson's, have been 'put out' by enemies (Jdg. 16:21). The impaired view is of Zion, the hill on which the temple was built. The devastating panorama seems to be no longer under the watchful eye of *yhwh* and prosperity (1 Kgs. 8:29; Ps.33:18) is also absent. Can the tearful eyes of the *'almānāh* bring healing power?

The widow-city's vision is thus focused on her inner experience of loneliness in this early, but repetitive stage of grief, where she yearns for solace, but cannot be comforted, or see any way of establishing a new way of life. Peter Martyr (Shute 2002:40) in his commentary draws out the idea that 'if it were an everyday matter shared by many people it would be considered more tolerable'. Every facet of her being is affected during her period of grief. There is absence of light, movement, and sound in the night setting. It is interesting to note that the Tampulma people of Ghana have two other idiomatic uses of the word 'eye' which bring new meaning to the *'almānāh*'s eyes. 'Her eyes squeezed up', means 'gloom spreads over her face', however, if 'her eye is filling' it means 'she has faith'. This could be an example of how this gap in the text could be filled in the reader context, without extrapolating it to a universal claim. The widow-city, therefore, still could have confidence and trust, despite the gloom.

Intertextually, this idea of suffering, accompanied by weeping and prayer is seen in the Christian New Testament, at the time when Jesus saw the city of Jerusalem and wept over it (Lk. 19.41). As mentioned earlier, Handel (in ed. Watkin Shaw 1981) wrote his famous Air in the Messiah: 'Behold, and see, behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto *his* sorrow', interpreting the widow's words of 'my sorrow' for the suffering of Jesus. So God, through the widow, seems to be performing an act of creation through death.

The text moves back and forth on the textual acrostic of the *'almānāh* and the psychological stage of the loneliness of grief to gain deeper interest and empathy

through the more vivid language and prolonged emphasis of the imperfective[121] and infinitive absolute[122] 'bitterly she weeps in the night' (Lam. 1:2). The reader's attention is sustained as the poet slows down the text in the on-going saga through the imperfective *bāk̲ô* and the intensifying effect of the infinitive absolute *t̲ib̲keh*. The sighing sound of the five gutturals ('*ayin – he' – 'ayin – ḥet – he'*)[123] adds another dimension to the visual idea of 'her cheek wet with tears'. The inner grief is being expressed externally as the tears come not only from her eyes, but also from her heart and from her innermost being. The cycle of past, present and future time is kept open before one's eyes through the repetitive use of the participle active in the combined strands of the literary and psychological weeping *'almānāh*.

Then again the sound of sobbing[124] and groaning is heard in the onomatopoeia of *'ănî* ... '*ênî* '*ênî* (1:16). Some readers could identify with the process of floods of tears, which bring relief and comfort in the face of a seemingly hopeless situation. Shakespeare's *Othello* (I.iii) mirrors this feeling that grief:

> Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature,
> That it engluts and swallows other sorrows
> And it is still itself.

The isolation and tears of grief frequently draw out a variety of responses from people witnessing suffering and disaster. The experiences of those people in the first Lamentation lyric is no exception. The community does not offer comfort. In the conflict of poetic antitheses, the watchful eye[125] of her friends has become the evil eye of her foes. Those who admired her as the focus of their attention have joined those who despise her. The strategy of poetic repetition brings to the fore again that a terrible reversal has taken place. Even worse, just like an enemy, *yhwh* has closed his

---

[121] Imperfective is defined by Waltke and O'Connor (1990:691) as 'an aspect (*Aspekt*) in which a situation is understood as on-going, whatever its temporal relation to the time of speaking'.
[122] Hebrew (along with a few closely related languages) is distinctive in having not one but two infinitive types: the infinitive construct and the infinitive absolute. The infinitive absolute is, says Bergsträsser (1983:56), 'a peculiarly Hebrew hybrid of verbal noun and verbal injection of imperative character'. Among its many uses in Biblical Hebrew it may intensify a finite verb, serve as a word of command, or function as a finite verb (Waltke and O'Connor, 1990:580-1).
[123] Lam. 1:2 *wəd̲im'āṯ̲ā* (and her tears) *'al leḥĕyāh* (on her cheeks) see also Morla (2004:66).
[124] Archer (1999:74) suggests that 'sobbing is especially characteristic of bereavement, and can be distinguished from a more passive form of tearfulness, which is associated with tender feelings'.
[125] The meaning of the Hebrew and Chaldean word *'îr* is 'watcher' or 'guardian angel' i.e. someone with eyes open.

watchful eye to her suffering instead of being alert and watching like a guardian angel. In Ghanaian, the idiomatic phrase 'look into his eyes' means 'depend on him'. Eye contact is important, as one of the sensory aspects of emotions in relationship, but for the *'almānāh*, as well as the sense of touch (she holds out her hands see 4.5), this is also missing. The widow isolates herself, but is also denied solidarity through social and religious abandonment. Both the community and *yhwh* have withdrawn in denial of her need for comfort. The reader may vouch also for this frequent feeling of estrangement in the rawness of grief.

4.7 Conclusion

Throughout the lyric the metaphorical *'almānāh*, as someone who has been lamenting her plight, has been working on a coping strategy, such that she is able to stay with her grief and not be persuaded by others to escape to a false hope, or by her own feelings of guilt, to deny her loneliness and isolation. In a plea for understanding she stretches out her hands to her turncoat friends and in her seeming abandonment utters an accusatory prayer to an absent *yhwh* and briefly confesses her own guilty feelings. Typical of those in loss, she calls down vengeance on others in a frantic need for their solidarity. She longs that they might experience the pain of rejection and be unjustly abandoned as she has been. On the other hand, she blames God for letting it all happen, for causing her present state of isolation. She wants to be taken seriously in her desperate search for justice, so that relationships can be restored and new agreements can be made.

The difficult reading about suffering, death, and violence in the Lamentations 1 text is mirrored by the struggle to survive in cross-cultural situations of psychological grief. During this 'time out' the *'almānāh* looks back at past textual and oral traditions, remembers family and social events, but in the current situation questions the on-going validity of political and religious beliefs. The way that the *'almānāh* remains in the present suffering has been shown through careful exegesis of key words, as represented in well-recognised expressions of grief responses. The textual and psychological strands join together in a process, which, by their very movement, point to alternative interpretations and new horizons for the *'almānāh* and for those who sit with her in grief. A denial of the feelings of desolation and desertion in death and destruction would cause the metaphorical city and the reader to remain stuck,

voiceless and immobile in a form of 'emotional anesthesia' (Backer et al. 1982:252).[126]

The *'almānāh* and those like her cope by re-living events. They protect themselves by keeping to the stages that they can cope with, which will vary according to the needs of a specific *'almānāh*. In later chapters the city will live out grief through other metaphorical images, which present readers with alternative methods of survival. There are hints of the image of Daughter of Zion (*baṯ-ṣiyyôn*), who has lost her beauty (Lam. 1:6) and is experiencing anger, which is another well-accepted emotion of grief. Metaphorical liveliness unveils a different coping mechanism and leads on into a new stage of grief.

[126] Backer et al. also note that numbness which comes when a death has occurred means that feelings of grief are not totally overwhelming.

5. *Bat-ṣiyyôn*: Anger and Shame Configured in Lamentations 2

> Lament provides us with a language of outrage that speaks against the way things are.
>
> J. Swinton

5.1 Introduction to *bat-ṣiyyôn*

The city called *'almānāh* in the first Lamentation is renamed and introduced in more detail as *bat-ṣiyyôn* in the second Lamentation. *Bat-ṣiyyôn* represents a change of imagery on the 'Textual Strand' and a corresponding mood swing on the 'Psychological Strand'. The focus on the third Cross-strand of the helix (Figure 9) is

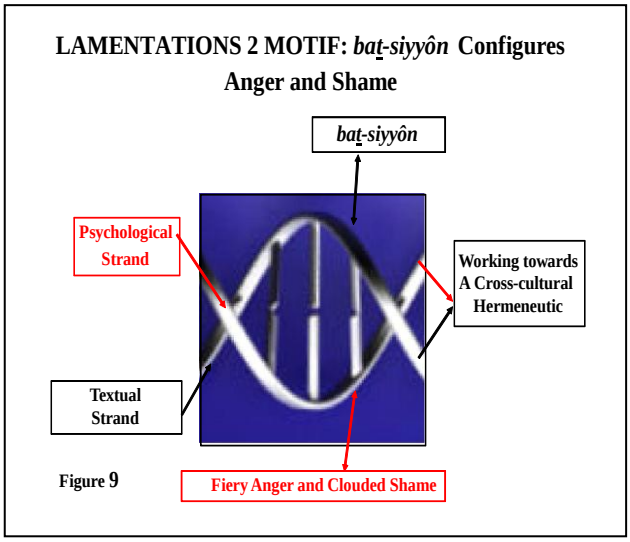


Figure 9

now switched to *bat-ṣiyyôn* (Daughter Zion MSG), rendered variously by translators as daughter Zion (NRSV), Fair Zion (TAN) or Jerusalem (NLT),[127] as she is shamed and beclouded in her dealings with the outrage of an angry God (*yhwh/'ādōnāy*). The textual destruction and fall of the city in the opening stanza set the scene and resonate with the intensification of well-known psychological feelings of anger and shame. Just as through her human body the *'almānāh* expresses her loneliness by her voice, hand movements and body stance, so through the physical structures of the *bat-ṣiyyôn* city, the devastation of anger and shame are demonstrated through her invaded temple, broken down walls and ruined dwellings. The violent invasion of her personal and national sanctuary, the smashing down of her protective boundaries and

[127] Maier (2008:2) points out that Zion and Jerusalem are often used in parallel lines in poetry and treated as synonyms.

walls has affected the way she functions. *Ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn*'s beautiful city buildings and lively community have become razed habitations (v.2), destroyed strongholds (v.5), a stripped Temple (v.6), sunken gates and smashed bars (v.9). Simultaneously, she is experiencing psychological feelings of abuse and dishonour (v.2), mourning and moaning (v. 5), rejection and shame (v. 5) and brutal invasion of privacy (v.9).

The process so far on the helix model has shown how *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn* stays within an acrostic format (Chapter 2), but also overflows the boundaries by her cry,*'êkāh* (Chapter 3). The third 'Cross-strand' of the model focuses on the city's heightened emotions as the image of *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn,* who in the past was *prefigured* as 'lovely and delicate' (Jer. 6:2, cf. Lam. 2:15), is now *configured* as 'covered … with the cloud of his anger' (Lam. 2:1 NIV). However, as yet there is no hope of an established *refiguration* in the future. The protective gates of the community have become places of death and barrenness instead of places of praise (Lam. 2:9 cf. Ps. 9:14). What is left of the rule of Zion is a 'forgotten footstool' (Lam. 2:1); *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn* is seemingly totally ostracised by *yhwh/'ā<u>d</u>ōnāy*, since 'no one escaped or survived' (Lam. 2:22). The whole community is affected. Fire and anger, destruction and shame, not only open and close the first verse, but also dominate the whole poem as *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn*'s confidence in *yhwh/'ā<u>d</u>ōnāy* for physical protection and emotional care is brought into question in a very serious way. This chapter will proceed to look at the expression of poetic wrath and how it translates into psychological anger and then at *yhwh/'ā<u>d</u>ōnāy* in the role of destructive enemy. The many facets of the *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn* imagery will then be examined to show how her aspects of grief and survival techniques through fragmentation and confusion can resonate cross-culturally with experiences of anger and shame today.

5.2 Poetic Wrath and Psychological Anger

The focus on the poetic 'day of wrath' (2:1 TAN) and the 'cloud of his [*yhwh*'s] anger' (2:1 NIV) in the opening stanza and throughout Lamentations 2 (vv. 2, 3, 6, 21, 22) resonates with anger[128] and its close counterpart shame, well-recognised

[128] For further discussions on anger in grief see Archer (1999:143), Bowlby (1991:246), Brueggemann (1977:269; 1995: xiv), Clark (2004:164-170), Joyce (1993:309), Kübler-Ross (1989) and Reimer (2002:549).

psychological experiences of grief, as Littlewood (1992:45-6) in her discussion on bereavement in adult life suggests:

> anger as hot displeasure may be directed towards the person who has died, others believed to have caused the death (or failed to prevent it), the self, or society in general. This may cause alienation of others and suicidal behaviour.

Furthermore, the shift from the description of God's anger to the experience of God as enemy, which takes place in Lam. 2:3-5 is highly suggestive of the sort of 'projection' which was hinted at in the previous chapter and referred to by Kübler-Ross (1989:4) in her psychological grief stages. She explains that in grief there are always feelings of anger[129] and rage, which are very close to experiences of shame and guilt. Kübler-Ross also observes that in a situation where there is loss or death, it is difficult to admit anger towards a deceased person, or someone who is no longer physically there. Emotions, therefore, are often disguised or repressed, so that hot displeasure and rage come out in different ways and the period of grief may also be prolonged. I am suggesting that following on from the feelings of abandonment and isolation experienced by the *'almānāh* in the previous chapter, it is possible that the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is in the psychological mood of projecting her feelings of anger onto others and more specifically onto *yhwh*.[130] Backer et al. (1982:252) note that anger in grief can also be reflected in irritability and bitterness, as it is directed at all those nearby, even at God. This is born out textually and psychologically in Lamentations 2 as will be demonstrated in the following paragraphs.

In his studies of adult bereavement, Parkes (1972:100-4-3) points out that in the case of apparent unjust punishment, anger is directed at those who are seen to have power over life and death. In the Lamentations 2 textual worldview, anger is directed at those in authority in national and religious rule, such as the king, elders, priests and prophets and even more importantly *yhwh*. Cross-culturally, in the reader's worldview, blame may be placed on the government, medical or legal professions, the clergy, scientists or the press. Indeed, anyone involved in the perceived active

[129] Reimer (2002:549) notes in a citation from Kübler-Ross (1989:44-45) that projection of anger can be at random: almost anything might serve as a trigger.
[130] Joyce (1993:312) in his psychological reading emphasises the anger expressed against God (Lam. 2:20) for the death of children and the slaying of priest and prophet.

process of wrong decisions or passive negligence resulting in damage or loss of life may be held responsible. God is also frequently blamed, not only for causing the disaster, but also for not intervening to prevent death or to save life.

In the second Lamentation it would appear, therefore, that fearing that the situation is out of control, both *yhwh* and *bat-ṣiyyôn* project blame for the destruction onto each other and onto others. *Bat-ṣiyyôn* accuses *yhwh* of acting in blazing anger or wrath (2:3) like an enemy (2:4) destroying all her citadels and strongholds (2:5) and causing suffering, tears and grief. In a desperate change of circumstances escalation occurs as *yhwh* seems to be carrying out 'the decree that he ordained long ago' (2:17) and is assisted not only by 'the enemy' (2:7), but by 'all who pass by' (2:15) and even by 'neighbours from roundabout' (2:22). In response *bat-ṣiyyôn* is non-compliant with her treatment and projects her anger on to *yhwh*. Further escalation occurs as she undergoes physical and emotional suffering: her 'stomach churns' (2.11), 'her heart is poured out like water' (2.19) and there is a process of dying all around her.[131] Tension exists in the relationship as *bat-ṣiyyôn* in turn accuses *yhwh* of projecting his anger onto *her* in the guise of an enemy. This idea of '*yhwh* as enemy' will be dealt with later in an excursus.

Westermann (1994:224) implies that expressing anger forms part of lament and need not impair a relationship, for:

> Wrath and anger are moods. They tend to flare up in the course of an interpersonal relationship; they are also extinguished within the ongoing course of such a relationship. Wrath is not a permanent trait of the personality. Wrath wells up and it goes away again. Thus the lamenter is able to say such things as 'How much longer will you be angry?' or 'How long will your wrath burn?'[132] Wrath is not equivalent to rejection.

Two Hebrew words are used for anger or wrath in Lamentations 2: *'aph* and *'ebrātô*. *'Aph* (2:1 (x2), 2:3, 2:6, 2:21, 2:22) means nostril or the member with which one

[131] See also Backer et al. (1982:24) for a case of a young woman's incurable illness, which shows similar bodily expressions and emotional responses as 'she experienced an increasing loss of control - first her lower extremities; next bladder and bowel control. She was coping with her fears and frustrations by constantly finding fault. She projected her anger about dying onto the environment and was non-compliant with the treatment régime. This caused an angry response by those around her as her demands upon them were increasing'.
[132] See e.g. Pss. 79:5; 80:5, 89:47.

breathes; face, or person whose rapid breathing is in the passion of human or divine anger. *'Ebrāṯô* (2:2) means an angry outburst of passion, anger, rage or wrath. When used in reference to God, or living beings in the Hebrew Bible, *'aph*[133] can be the breath of life (Gen. 2:7, 7:22), or conversely, the blast of death (Job 4:9) culminating in laying bare the foundations of the earth (Ps. 18:15). Heated passion can be as a result of a grudge against another's behaviour because of a loss sustained. This is demonstrated in the Biblical text on the occasion when Esau lost his blessing to his brother, Jacob (Gen. 27:45). Anger can be aroused between a husband (e.g. Jacob) and wife (e.g. Rachel) over the inability to have children (Gen. 30:2). The relationship between God and humanity can also become endangered when there is mistrust (e.g. Moses Ex. 4:14), or complaint (Num. 11:1), or profanity in the community (Num. 25:3), or violation of holy things (e.g. Achan Josh. 7:1), or provocation (Jud. 2:14), or an indiscretion with sacred things (e.g. Uzzah 2 Sam. 6:7), or when there is an unwise king (e.g. Jehoiachim 2 Kgs. 13:3). Thus anger, although it is not a permanent state, is seen to have an adverse effect on relationships in families and communities, between nations and between God and humanity. In this second lyric, the feelings of isolation and loneliness of the first lyric have changed to strong emotions of antagonism in grief in the face of anger and shame. The next section will proceed to examine the conflicting imagery of *yhwh* as absent and passive, but at the same time aggressively angry like an enemy.

Excursus: *yhwh/'āḏōnāy* as Enemy

The image of God acting like an enemy emphasises the fact that for both the *'almānāh* and the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* there is no divine or human comfort to be found at all, as they shame and blame each other. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:84) suggests that it faces the reader with the 'alterity [or other] of a divinity'. The image of a forgiving and ever-present God, characterised as 'gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love'[134] in the Deuteronomic, Zionist and prophetic trajectories, is absent in the violence and devastation of the Lamentations 2 text. Moreover, in this confused and dire situation, *yhwh* has become like an enemy and destroyed Israel (2:5a). *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* and *yhwh* are experiencing distance and tensions in their relationship. In consequence, the meaning of engagement and the seriousness of the two-way

[133] Occurs 276 times in the Hebrew Bible see also Lam. 1:12, 3:43, 3:66 and 4:11.
[134] See Neh. 9:17; Pss. 103:8, 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jon. 4:2; Nah. 1:3.

involvement for both parties *yhwh* and *bat̲-ṣiyyôn*, is brought to the fore. Experience of the darker side of relationships may be configured as an important part of *bat̲-ṣiyyôn'*s strategy for survival. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:84) maintains that the idea of 'God as enemy' juxtaposed with 'God as compassionate' should be 'counterpointed not overturned'. This role change links to the idea that mourning and rejoicing run in parallel as ritual opposition.[135] It is part of the hermeneutical strands on the model, which both counterpoint and resonate with each other. Dobbs-Allsopp goes on to explain:

> Counterpoint is a musical term which is the art of adding one or more melodies as accompaniment to a given melody according to fixed rules. In the case of 'God as enemy' juxtaposed with 'God as compassionate' it is more like an invertible counterpoint in which melodies may be changed in position above or below one another. So with the counterpoint of 'God as enemy' it is a heart-felt jolt in the extremity of cruelty and terror which is a reminder of such inexpressible suffering and hurt.

A situation where there is unresolved conflict captures such counterpointing in the apocryphal text of the Wisdom of Solomon by showing the protective side of *yhwh*:

> Therefore you provided a flaming pillar of fire
> as a guide for your people's unknown journey, (Wis. 18:3a)

juxtaposed and fore-grounded by his darker side as enemy:

> Your all-powerful word leapt from heaven, from the royal throne,
> Into the midst of the land that was doomed,
> A stern warrior
> Carrying the sharp sword of our authentic command,
> And stood and filled all things with death,
> And touched heaven while standing on earth. (Wis. 18:15-16)

In the Hebrew Bible counterpointing also occurs where disaster has struck and God is accused of being both the creator and the cause of suffering, hence the prophetic saying in Amos (3:6):

[135] See 4.2 on Role Reversals..

> Can misfortune come to a town
> If the Lord has not caused it?

and in Isaiah (45:7):

> I form light and create darkness,
> I make weal and create woe -
> I the Lord do all these things.

The Lamentations poet thus uses evocative expressions, which give time and space to develop the disturbed scene of a world, which is inverted, out of control and becoming a threat to *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*. Key words with alliterative qualities and visual impressions counterpoint and prefigure the Genesis 1 idea of chaos and creation. Creative/destructive words such as darkness, (*ḥōšeḵ* 3:2, 6), deep (as in 'down' *yârad* 1:9, 16, 2:10, 18, 3:48), wind or breath (*rûaḥ* 3:56, 4:20), and water (*mmayim* 1:16, 2:19, 3:48, 54, 5:4) become *mots crochets*, which link the textual frameworks and emotional phases across the curves of the hermeneutical helix. They produce agitated movement in the steady pace of the acrostic throughout the five lyrics.

Yu Xin (513-81 BCE) seeks to unlock the mystery of destruction at the time of the downfall of the Liang Dynasty and his poetry resonates transculturally with the Lamentations cry of grief, as seen through the opening Alas! (*'êkāh*) and the conflict encountered in personal and national disasters:

> Alas
> When mountains crumbled
> National calamities seemed inescapable
> As spring and autumn seasons passed
> Heaven's Will – human's doing
> Sorrowful and heart breaking.

Graham (1980:55) in his arrangement and translation of this Chinese text suggests that 'neither simply fate nor mistakes in government could explain the destruction of a mighty empire'. Archie Lee (2008:133) suggests that the idea that the heavenly will moves in full circle to govern people's lives, is 'significant for understanding

Lament',[136] even though in other writings Yu Xin is sceptical of the heavenly will. Tongqun (1997:52-9) notes that 'scholars usually agree that there are two contradictory conceptions of "heaven" in Yu Xin's mind: one takes it as the natural order; and the other declares that heaven represents a personal and wilful character in charge of human affairs'.[137]

Yhwh's presence for *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* has a negative sense, which in tragic circumstances holds little hope of 'restorative and palliative capacity'.[138] *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is hidden under a cloud, she is powerless and helpless, as she is destroyed in the fire and overthrown in anger. Exum (1992:5, 9)[139] suggests that in tragedy 'there is a resistance to closure or philosophical "neatness"' in the chaos of good and evil found in the lyrics and also found in Genesis 1 and Job 2:10. The enmity between *yhwh* and *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is thus a clear example of situations of national and personal disaster, where both textually and psychologically anger finds an outlet in blaming the ineffectiveness of God or some other authority figure, in the failure to heal or restore life. It would be more comfortable and neat to be able to see the images of *yhwh* and *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* in clearer focus, but they are constantly moving[140] in the sudden outbursts of anger or hidden by the shadows of shame. So these feelings of grief are hard to come to terms with. Time and space is needed for such configuration.

Yhwh as an enemy has an arsenal of weaponry in his angry war. Moving swiftly between the lyrics, he targets *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (Lam. 2:4, 3:12) with his bow; just as purposefully he spreads a net for the *'almānāh*'s feet (Lam. 1:13) and even more

[136] I am positing that in dynamic repetition *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* has the tenacity to believe *yhwh*'s 'constancy in anger'. Pyper (2001:62) suggests that 'the thread of survival in the book is God's constancy in anger'.
[137] Lee maintains that that 'it is both heaven's will and human responsibility that brought about the destruction, and this constitutes the core of the lament'. Lee makes the point that ambiguity and tension is also maintained in Lamentations: both texts resist the temptation to view human sufferings one-dimensionally. The three-dimensional helix also emphasises this point.
[138] In palliative care anger often hides feelings of frustration, powerlessness and helplessness in not being able to stop the disease and the impending death so all parties can refuse to co-operate in the experience of suffering and grief (Backer et al. 1982:24). Walters (1997:28) links the 'greatly disturbed' emotions of Jesus in the story of Lazarus with three other occasions when the verb *embrimaomai* is used (Matt. 9:30, Mk. 1:43, 14:5) where it relates to stern warnings or indignant anger, suggesting that Jesus may have been expressing the anger of grief and loss (Jn. 11:21, 32). The sisters, Mary and Martha blame the death of their brother on Jesus for not being there when he died.
[139] Exum proposes that comedy gives voice to a fundamental trust in life; in spite of obstacles, human foibles, miscalculations and mistakes, life goes on, whereas tragedy lacks comedy's restorative and palliative capacity.
[140] This movement is demonstrated by the helix, through change of imagery, which is repeatedly re-shaped by form and utterance.

seriously, his deadly aim shoots the *geb̲er* in the 'vitals' (or kidney, or heart 3:3). *Yhwh* uses the military tactic of kindling, or sending fire, used by enemies in the bloodthirsty days of the Judges (Jdg. 1:8) and during the reign of the Syrian King Hazael (2 Kgs. 8:12) to destroy *bat̲-ṣiyyôn/yiśrā'ēl* (Lam. 1:13, 2:3, 4, 4:11 cf. Ps. 74:7). Powerful flames burn down her defences and she becomes surrounded by charred remains. *Bat̲-ṣiyyôn/ yiśrā'ēl* is experiencing a double-defeat, through the imagery of the horn[141] so that, her horn of power is cut off (2:3) and by contrast the horn of the enemy overpowers her (2:17). *Yhwh*'s right hand of protection (2:3)[142] is withdrawn, but is replaced by the powerful 'right hand set like a foe', which kills indiscriminately (2:4). *Yhwh* has used his destructive power as an enemy to intrude into and 'swallow up' *bat̲-ṣiyyôn*'s personal dwellings, to destroy her protective fortifications and break down her religious boundaries of altar, priest, temple, and holy mount.

The expectation that God will 'fight for' and not 'fight against' during times of trouble brings in a lack of trust and feelings of injustice in life. The lyrics use verbal artistry to emphasise enemy tactics through the symbolism of the bi-syllabic name 'Israel' (2:1, 3, 5) interpreted as 'he will rule as God'. The first syllable has the root *sarah*, meaning 'to prevail' or 'have power as a prince' and the second syllable *'el* meaning 'strength' or 'the Almighty'. Welhausen (Jones 1989:299) explains that 'Israel means *'el fights*, and *yhwh* was the fighting *'el* after whom the people named itself. The War camp was the cradle of the nation; it was the oldest sanctuary'. Welhausen emphasised the importance for Israelite faith and history through the concept that [*yhwh*] was a warrior who engaged in battle on behalf of his people. *Yhwh* 'is a warrior' (Ex. 15:3) who fights for his people (Deut. 3:22; Josh. 23:10; Neh. 4:20). In the context of war in Lam. 2:1-8, which takes place on the Temple mount, there is thus an ironical twist in the name, as *yhwh* is cast in the role of an angry enemy and the author of destruction. In this situation instead of fighting *for bat̲-ṣiyyôn* the people he loves, *yhwh* victimises, shames and consumes *yiśrā'ēl* as he fights *against* her.

[141] The horn is used not only by an animal for defence, but it is also used in connection with the selection, defence, honour and power of rulers e.g. 1 Sam. 2, 16; Pss 18, 75, 89; Ezek 29 and Dan. 7, 8.
[142] See also 4.5 on *yâd* and *kaph*.

Yhwh as an angry enemy is in a role reversal, like the *'almānāh* as an abandoned woman is in a role reversal. In the Zionist trajectory it was *yhwh* who affirmed the establishment of the kingdom and priesthood forever (2 Sam. 7:13; Ps. 110:4). Nevertheless, this warrior guise, covered in more detail in the next chapter, allows a setting of breakdown and anarchy instead of stability and cohesion, and thus is an important thread in the Hebrew Bible. For example, the psalmist laments the downfall of the Davidic dynasty[143] in the words: 'you have broken through all his walls you have laid his strongholds in ruins' (Ps. 89:40). Likewise, Job[144] complains to 'God' in military terms: 'you bring fresh troops against me'. In his tradition,[145] Job questions the cruel oppression and irrational destruction of a world that God himself has so carefully fashioned and his immoral behaviour in giving preferential treatment to the wicked (Crenshaw 2001:339).

Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:79) argues that the ancient Israelite prophetic traditions about the 'day of the Lord', which 'assert the belief that God will intervene in history and defeat God's and Israel's enemies in battle', have been turned on their head. This is evident in the prophetic books of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Amos. In Isaiah the context of God's battle against his own people and his much-loved city demonstrates that the traditional prophetic expectation of the 'day of the Lord' has been reversed: 'See, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger' (Isa. 13:9a). Ezekiel announces that the time of God's judgement against Jerusalem is near and there is no mercy, the people will not be spared: 'soon now I will pour out my wrath upon you; I will spend my anger against you' (Ezek. 7:8a).

Amos 5 is a lament over maiden Israel's mistaken confidence and heartless religious attitudes showing her inverted experience of the celebratory 'day of the Lord':

> Fallen, no more to rise,
> Is maiden Israel, (Amos 5:2a)

[143] C.S. Rodd (2001:391) suggests that this refers to the death of Josiah (2Kgs. 23:29-30) or the exile and imprisonment of Jehoiachim (2Kgs. 24:8-17).
[144] *'El-o'ah* (Job 10:17) is the singular form of *'ĕlōhîm* (Job 10:3) as used in poetry.
[145] As mentioned earlier Gous (1992:199) suggests that 'Job had a worldview and ethos similar to that of the Davidic trajectory. Similarities between Lamentations and Job should therefore not be regarded as strange'. I am positing that similarities between the patterns of grief expressed poetically resonate strongly today too.

> Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!
> Why do you want the day of the Lord?
> It is darkness not light; (Amos 5:18)

The second Lamentation thus depicts *yhwh/'ādōnāy* in his role as enemy as he exhibits fiery anger, breaks down walls and commands entrance into the life and community of the city. His mouth, is no longer used for speech, or for the breath of life, but instead is used in destructive action, through the imagery of gorging and disgorging. He devours, swallows up (Lam. 2:2, 5) and joins the enemy in hissing and snapping his jaws like an animal in hungry anticipation (2:16). The poet uses the symbol of enemy to bring out the characteristics of anger as displayed by a monster of chaos, who violates all that is pure, beautiful and holy (2:1, 6, 7). The God who breathed the breath of life is now a tyrant who breathes the breath of death (2:1, cf. Job 16:9). The mouth of the Lord, who created the world and saw that it was good, is now swallowing up Israel, like a wild animal eating its prey (2:5; cf. Job 6:12). Not only that, he has influenced his creatures, so that diabolical practices are apparent: women now use the inhumane survival technique of devouring their young. They too are using their mouths for destruction, rather than for praise to *yhwh* and for speaking wise sayings to the community.

It is noteworthy that there is neither mention of friends (1:2, 19), nor allies (1:2), as loneliness continues through the pervasion of fiery anger and destruction in this second lyric. There is a build-up of antagonism, as God is accused of being powerless in the face of the enemy (2:3). Furthermore, he has acted just like an enemy (2:4, 5) and even played into the enemy's hands (2:7). It is so bad that all the enemies, which would also implicate *yhwh/'ādōnāy* (2:17), are celebrating together their successful plan to annihilate Israel. There is a dichotomy here in that *yhwh* behaves as a warrior and yet at the same time the accusation is that he is defecting and is powerless. *Yhwh* is seen as changing his allegiance; he no longer protects his people. He has not only abandoned them, but in a change of mood, has eaten his words and so devoured *bat-ṣiyyôn.* Maybe this ambiguity of anger[146] as a mood rather than as rejection, could

[146] Stroebe et al. (1993:28) suggest that anger is commonly, though not universally, experienced in grief. The forms it takes are diverse, as it is an emotion seeing an outlet. It can be felt as anger, hatred, resentment, envy, or a sense of unfairness and it can be directed at the deceased, family or friends, God, physicians, or oneself.

have been in the mind of the poet in the construct of the acrostic, the over-riding cry of *'êkāh* and the dynamic response of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn.* The rest of the chapter will concentrate on the imagery of the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* to see how she survives: does she breathe her last in the violent and constant onslaught of *yhwh*'s anger?

5.3 *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*: A Multivalent Symbol of Honour and Shame

The city is named *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* in the introductory cameo of Lam. 2:1 (also in 2:10, 13, 18 and 4:22), but *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is *not* presented as a single metaphor with one primary sense, but has more than one referent. She is presented metonymically as *yhwh*'s 'footstool', sometimes representing the earth as opposed to the heavens (Isa. 66:1), sometimes representing the temple, which contains the ark of the covenant (Lam. 2:1; Pss. 99:5, 132:7), whilst at other times representing the ark itself (1 Chron. 28:2).[147] *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is called 'the beauty of Israel' (Lam. 2:15 cf. Ps. 50:2), 'joy of all the earth', and 'city of the great king' (Ps. 48:2). She is the place where *yhwh* dwells. Thus *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* becomes in the Lamentations lyrics, what D.B. Miller (2002:44) refers to as a 'tensive symbol',[148] which is 'multivalent'. Through her symbolism, she is what Goethe would call 'infinitely active'. Goethe (in Wellek 1981:211) explains further:

> [T]rue symbolism is where the particular represents the more general, not as a dream or a shadow but as to some extent inexpressible and unapproachable as a living, momentary revelation of the inscrutable.

The following paragraphs will explore the feelings of anger and shame from a cross-cultural perspective through the lively imagery of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, who she is and her many characteristics.

The precise meaning of the name *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is uncertain, but in the Hebrew Bible there are 106 references to *ṣiyyôn* (Zion) of which 30 have the word *baṯ* (Daughter)

[147] Maier (2008:2) offers an interesting perspective on the female personification of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* as a 'sacred space' and as a woman, who represents the inhabitants of this space. She explores the crisis of exile through the images of daughter, mother, bride, widow and whore and the emergence of a new national-religious identity.

[148] Miller proposes that 'a symbol in general is a relatively stable and repeatable element of perceptual experience, standing for some layer of meaning or set of meanings, which cannot be given, or not fully given in perceptual experience itself'. Thus a symbol is representative, referring beyond itself to something else. See also Wheelwright (1962:92-110).

attached. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is a name used not only to refer to the physical features of the city, such as the gates (Ps. 9:14; 87:2; Lam. 2:9), but also to the people who inhabit *ṣiyyôn* and meet at the gates to praise *yhwh.* Zion is a holy hill, the temple where *yhwh* dwells as he surrounds his people (Ps. 125.1-2) and listens to their praises (Ps. 9:11). Maier (2008:1) writes:

> Religiously Jerusalem has often been called the "navel of the earth" and is an essential part of the eschatology of three world religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Although each religion has distinctive views of this city's significance … all three of these religions consider the city their religious heritage.

Psychologically and religiously she is a space where strong sentiments are born, but at the same time where angry battles are fought. Boundaries, such as poetic acrostic form, social traditions and physical walls, have been broken down and re-built in the to-and-fro of pact and disagreement, covenant-making and covenant-breaking. Historically and politically the city of Zion as a fortified city provided protection and safety through its elevation, its walls (Lam. 2:7, 8, 18) and its citadels. It was a stronghold of the Jebusites, which had been captured by King David and made his residence (2 Sam. 5:7, 1 Chron. 11:5). Some interpreters of the Hebrew Bible, such as Gottwald (1987:335-6), claim that the nation's life is unequivocally assured by *yhwh* in the dynastic promise of the Davidic Covenant, so that Zion remains the unshakeable earthly abode of *yhwh.* As mentioned in the introduction, Gottwald, Albrektson and Gous concentrate on the promise conditional upon proven loyalty to *yhwh* through the Mosaic Covenant. Lamentations rails against the laws of deed and consequence and the inviolability of the city in the sense that it is only remembered and given value when the king is in residence and when the people are celebrating the good life. This raises issues of identity, law, and justice, not only on the 'Textual Strand', but also conflicts of honour and shame on the 'Psychological Strand'. Stability is now absent in the chaotic catastrophe where:

> The Lord in his wrath
> Has shamed Fair Zion (Lam. 2:1)

The going-back-over events and feelings known as the recursion[149] of grief is exemplified here. The shame and stripping of the honour belonging to *bat-ṣiyyôn* acts like a repeat experience of loss of status, thus linking back to the first lyric and the *'almānāh*, where loneliness and abandonment are apparent:

> Gone from Fair Zion are all
> That were her glory; (Lam. 1:6)

The city's loss of all that she valued becomes a repetitive theme. The metaphorical city is visibly expanded to symbolise the whole land and nation of Judah, affectionately known as 'the virgin daughter of Judah', so in Lam. 1:15b (CEV):

> Judah was a woman untouched,
> but you let her be trampled
> like grapes in a wine pit.

Strong antithetical repetition in this imagery shows that instead of the sacred idea of the removal of one's shoes before approaching a revered place (e.g. Ex. 3:5) there is an angry trampling under foot of sacred things. The *bat-ṣiyyôn* mentioned by name in Lam. 1:6 disappears from the first lyric reappearing in Lam. 2:1. Instead of social concern for the protection of the vulnerable young woman, she becomes socially bound, a theologically abused 'footstool' where hope is vanquished. Backer et al. (1982:24) observe that 'anger often hides feelings of frustration, powerlessness and helplessness', such emotions demonstrating a feeling of everything being out of control.

Bat-ṣiyyôn (2:1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 18; 1:6; 4:22), therefore, is called by various names. She is not only symbolically a physical country (*bat-yəhûdāh* 2:2, 1:15), a geographical land (*yiśrā'ēl* 2:1, 3, 5) and a political city (*bat-yərûšālaim* 2:13, 15; 1:7,8,17; 4:12), she is also Jacob (*ya'ăqōb* 2:3), who represents a community of people (*bat-'ammî* 2:11; 1:11; 3:48; 4:3, 6, 10), who interrelate with each other and

[149] A backward movement can occur through recursion, which takes the *bat-ṣiyyôn* (or the reader) back, not necessarily to the starting point of the helix, but for a needed repeat of an experience, until ready to move on. This is illustrated by the *'almānāh*'s incremental repetition of *kol* (4.2.2) resulting in repeated complaints (4.4), the *geber*'s battle plan manoeuvres (6.5) and the *bənê ṣiyyôn/bat-'ammî*'s exploration of reversal and rapprochement (7.3). A further example of repetition and recursion occurs with *Qoheleth* and the motifs in Ecclesiastes as explained by Christianson (1998:44).

with their God, (*yhwh*). In the Hebrew Bible the name *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* appears once in the historical books, once in the Hebrew Psalmody, eighteen times in the prophets[150] (pre-exilic and post-exilic) and eight times in Lamentations.[151] Follis (1987:177), in her chapter on 'The Holy City as Daughter', suggests that in about half of the cases, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* 'becomes the quintessence of civilization and culture, of a stable lifestyle, of permanent relationships'. Conversely, in the other half of the cases, the city has fallen out of divine favour and is the object of wrath, mortification, and destruction. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* does not stay in one position for long, as lament is repeated relentlessly and the mood of grief wells up and goes away again.

Follis (1987:173) compares *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* with the image of Athena, the patroness of Athens and the virgin daughter of Zeus, goddess of civilisation. Follis suggests that together they comprise the virtually inseparable relationship between the land and its inhabitants. However, in my view a more appropriate link is with 'Marianne' in

Figure 10 La Liberté Guidant le Peuple

Delacroix's painting of the turbulence of 'The Barricade', which is in the style of the Romantic School (Figure 10). To me the beauty, anger and shaming of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*

[150] Mandolfo (2007) innovatively explores the conflicting and complementary voices of the Bible and gives Daughter Zion a voice to talk back to the prophets in a dialogic theology of the Lamentations lyrics.

[151] Daughter of Zion is not mentioned as such in the Christian New Testament, but when Jesus was being led to his crucifixion and women were following him, beating their breast and wailing for him he calls them 'Daughters of Jerusalem' (Lk. 23:27-8).

portrayed in the Hebrew poetry and the beauty, violence and exposure portrayed by Marianne in her Phrygian cap reflecting the French Revolution, contrast the symbolism and realism of situations of conflict and war. The artist captures the image of Marianne, surrounded by weapons of war, holding the French flag in her right hand and a bayonet in her left, in a portrayal of a revolutionary movement, which was so strong in 19th century France. Likewise, *bat-ṣiyyôn* is not a dead metaphor, but she is a living symbol of a people in the process of surviving the horror of war and the destruction by enemies. *Bat-ṣiyyôn*, like Marianne, is surrounded by the confusion of the angry mood of war, but in her feminine vulnerability she may be seen either as shamefully exposed, or brazenly withstanding the force of those who oppose and abuse her. *Bat-ṣiyyôn* and Marianne thus become symbols that live on. *Bat-ṣiyyôn*, in her various guises, embodies the sacredness of the displaced temple and survives the sanctions, which have brought anger and shame. The dynamic imagery is thus helpful for understanding grief in the two-stranded reading of the Lamentations text, as it offers strategies for times of change and emotional strength during periods of disaster. Such coping mechanisms of exposure and survival, I am positing, are flexible and were not only appropriate during such times as the exile, but can be read back into the text from our situations of grief today.

Through her verbal lament over the ruin of past glory, *bat-ṣiyyôn* becomes a visual substitute for the emptiness of a past ideology. Attention is drawn to fallen buildings, sunken gates, and broken bars; a scene littered with fainting children, languishing young women and mothers picking over the refuse for food. Christianson (2007:226) in his work on *Qoheleth* captures the idea of the haunting effects of death as another example of how words bring to life a visual scene. *Qoheleth*'s word-pictures raise questions through the familiar surroundings of the home (Eccl. 12:3), the workplace (at the mill, 12:3, 5) and the street (12:4-5), even the ceremonial recognition of death (the shutting doors, 12:4) and the fear of the unknown in the byways (12:5). Such hypotyposis[152] provides the reader space for reflection, which in the words of Eco

[152] Eco suggests that hypotyposis is the rhetorical effect by which words succeed in rendering a visual scene. In order to describe a poor and abandoned place in an underdeveloped country, Eco told his friends that it looked like Hiroshima in August 1945. In this text the poet describes the space in which the characters and the reader can move about and lists the buildings in a cumulative sense to show what once were important markers of position and situation in the city. Another example is Ground Zero, the grave of the Twin Towers, which depicts silence, stillness and the lack of activity.

(2004:106-7) 'triggers not only pre-existing cognitive patterns, but also pre-existing body experiences'.

Bat-ṣiyyôn thus becomes culturally symbolic for her land and national identity. Through her there is visual expression of participation in events. Just as Marianne holds the flag and represents the on-going life of France in Delacroix's painting,[153] so *bat-ṣiyyôn* symbolises the survival of her community, her country, and her beliefs. Just as the colours and design of the French flag in the painting are uniquely recognisable and its positioning used as a social and political signal, so *bat-ṣiyyôn* is an emblem representing the relationship of the city with the people of Jerusalem, Judah, and the land of Israel. A flag can be raised as an emblem of confidence, or conversely lowered as a token of truce or surrender. *Bat-ṣiyyôn* in her various roles is lifted up in position as a holy-city, or a divine daughter, or lowered in status, cast down from heaven to earth (Lam. 2:1), even sunk into the ground (2:9). Kaiser (1987:172) notes the sensory imagery in the agitation of *bat-ṣiyyôn* as she '*sees* the battle standards,[154] *hears* the trumpets and *feels* the writhings of her womb' (Jer. 4:19-21). Like Marianne, *bat-ṣiyyôn* is fore-grounded as a multivalent symbol of survival over the shameful death of her people.

5.4 Clouded Identity and Unjust World

Bat-ṣiyyôn in addition to her bold image of survival also has a veiled identity, or hidden character portrayed by her link with the Hebrew word *yā'îb*, meaning dense or dark. Since the word is unique to Lamentations 2:1 it is important to look at its translation in more detail. Jerome translated the text as: 'covered over with fog, obscured with darkness (*obtexit caligine*)', but Peter Martyr (Shute 2002:69) is persuaded 'along with Ibn Ezra and Rashi that it means lifting up as high as the clouds'. Thus it would mean that 'in his anger the Lord had lifted up that nation and made it magnificent and famous, so that it might be thrown down even more'. Shute

[153] The imagery of Marianne became a part of French culture and currency of the time, as she appeared on the French franc and on French postage stamps. In the same way, the image of Britannia also represented more than a geographical demarcation by the Romans of Great Britain. She was also a beautiful young woman, who wore a helmet, held a spear (or three-pronged trident), had a shield imprinted with the British Union Flag and sometimes had a lion beside her. As a national figure in times of war she, like Marianne and *bat-ṣiyyôn*, survived changes in culture.

[154] Cross-culturally the standard or flag when flown at half-mast is a sign of mourning and death. In situations of conflict, war and rebellion, the flag may be burned by enemy forces..

adds that Rashi (1040-1105) talks of 'lifting up, not in connection with the verb "becloud" but rather with reference to line 2 of Lam. 2:1 from the heavens earth[ward]'. Shute suggests that 'perhaps Martyr confused Rashi with Perush: how beclouded: God exalted Zion in his anger in order to cast her down from a high place'. Some Biblical interpretations, have both literary and psychological overtones, such as 'disgraced Zion' (CEV), 'cast a dark shadow over Jerusalem' (NLT), 'covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud' (NASB) and 'covered with obscurity the daughter of Sion' (DRA).[155] The Tanakh version quite simply states 'Alas! the Lord in his wrath has shamed Fair Zion'.

The imagery of a cloud suggests both concrete and abstract meanings. The cloud simultaneously veils *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* and then unveils the anger of *yhwh*; it covers her beauty, her potential, but in public disgrace casts her down in an all-encompassing poetic manner from 'heaven to earth'. A cloud in the Hebrew Bible is often associated with a theophany, as in the exodus (Ex. 13:21-2, cf. Ps. 78:14) during the giving of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 19:16-19) and at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kgs. 8:10-11). In the Lamentations text, the cloud seems to be protecting the intimacy of a relationship between *yhwh* and *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* and at the same time revealing uncomfortable issues of distance and hot feelings that must be faced. Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:44) suggests that in the shrouded mystery of the text 'it is easier to come to terms with God's absence and silence, than to imagine that God is actively violent and hurtful'. Berkovits (Neusner 1994:88-90) in his head-on challenge to faith, morality and theological anthropology after the Holocaust, emphasises the theological significance of the 'hiding God' of history. He points out that 'God is revealed in the midst of the hiddenness in the suffering of his people'.[156]

The belief in a 'just world' or a 'just God' may become clouded or overshadowed by the experience of loss and grief, thus challenging previously accepted beliefs about

[155] Translated as 'in gloomy darkness' (*enténébré*) by the *Bible de Jérusalem.*

[156] Berkovits argues that faith history has not been erased from the face of the earth by power history, notwithstanding the incalculable material superiority of the forces arrayed against it through all history. Those who survive are witnesses to God's existence and his 'presence in absence'. Daughter Zion is experiencing *yhwh* as an enemy. What appear to be his 'powerlessness' and his absence are being revealed in a cloud of anger, fire and destruction. Does Daughter Zion experience his rescuing presence when she is in the fire, crying rivers of tears (Lam. 2:1-3, 18; Isa. 43:2) or does restoration come after the pain of disaster at a time of later reflection?

the world. The world is no longer an orderly place where long-term goals and plans can be undertaken with clarity, focused on a process of refiguration, restoration and recovery. Archer (1999:140) discusses the emphasis of the socio-psychological importance of a controllable consistent world: the belief in a just world or a just God. A bias through such a disposition will influence how people attribute causality. In a situation of war and death, Keel (1978:78) suggests that 'the view which a particular group or culture holds of its enemies is crucial to an understanding of that group or culture'. A given community would acknowledge as a type of enemy those who represent the opposite of what the community recognise as good and desirable. The link between deed and consequence or merit and fate is ruptured and becomes a threat in the Hebrew Bible, so that, as Job posited, people no longer get what they deserve. However, in order to maintain this belief in the face of negative events, as Archer continues to explain, 'many people will be motivated to attribute blame for the event to the victim, or to denigrate them so that they can be seen as deserving their fate'. It may be conjectured that 'in a just world, [a] child would not die: therefore it was someone's actions or lack of action that caused it'. Links with religious beliefs can, however, aid the acceptance of present suffering and loss, especially in the Hindu and Buddhist notions of *Karma* and the belief that the life one lives now determines where one goes in the next life. The reader's view of death will also have enormous impact on how the expression of anger in grief is judged. For example, if the reader believes in immortality to the extent that death is just a 'passing on', then the anger of grief over death may be minimised, suppressed or even seen as an inconsistent emotion.

So throughout the abstruseness of Lamentations 2 violent action is attributed to *yhwh*/*'ādōnāy*. Accusations are also levelled at the religious authorities, as the silent elders in their extremity are unable to fulfil their obligations to speak authoritatively and wisely, reminding the reader that people may be blamed for not acting. Probing questions are raised in Lam. 2:13. Witnesses are needed to bring details of the case out into the open in order to move things forward. If there is to be a just trial for a case of physical destruction and psychological shaming in a situation such as that of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, there must be four elements present (Ricoeur (1995a:195-6). There must be a third party, a legal system, a trial and a sentence, and in order for law to be re-established a sanction must be imposed. In a case where the victim has been publicly humiliated, proved guilty and self-esteem has been affected, there needs to be clarity

about sanction and about how that person will be restored. In this setting of war, the text clearly states that there is no law (Lam. 2:9), but *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* needs to persuade *yhwh* to state her faults and she needs to find a third party witness, so that sanctions can be imposed, to free her from her public humility.

Baṯ-ṣiyyôn is on trial, but finally in Lam. 2:20 she speaks out to defend her case. Clinebell (1984:221, 224) in his pastoral resources for bereavement care and counselling, suggests that during the experience, expression and working through of painful feelings there is often a loss of clear identity, as well as feelings of anger. He explains that catharsis of feelings can be encouraged by asking questions in order to deal with unresolved guilt (remorse, shame) and anger (resentment, rage), since guilt and anger are the two feelings which most often infect the grief wound. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* speaks out against the way things are, as she struggles to establish who she is in the haze of constantly changing horizons.

5.5 Sacred Space, Invaded Privacy and Barrenness

Bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn[157] is another named facet of the tensive symbol, which needs to be interpreted carefully. Knox suggests the following rendering of Lam. 2:13:

> Might I confront thee with such another as thyself! What queen so unhappy as Jerusalem (*habbaṯ yərûšālaim*), what maid as Sion (*bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn*) desolate?

I am suggesting that *bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, having lost her beauty (Lam. 1:6), is suffering grief resulting from the anger and shame of her invaded privacy and the resultant wounds. Alternatively, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* represents a woman giving birth (Jer. 4:31), but her scream in the face of struggle does not bring joy at the birth of a child (Jn. 16:21), but in contradistinction, it is like the anguish of a soldier fainting before his killers. This is reflected cross-culturally in a Babylonian incantation to Marduk,[158] where the

[157] Morla's interpretation is *doncella de la hija de siyyon*: he treats the expression as a traditional formula to describe a capital city of a country or a nation. See Lam. 2:1, 4, 10, 18; 4:22 and Isa. 23:12; 37:22; Jer. 14:17. Other translations of *bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn* in Lam. 2:13 include 'Sion' (KNO); '*la bella Sion* or *la hija de Sion*' (NVI); '*la population de Sion*' (BDS); 'Jerusalem; the fairest city of Israel' (LIV); 'Fair Zion' (TAN); 'Zion' (GNB).

[158] See Brenner and Dijk Hemmes (1993:94) citing Van der Toorn (1987:83) and Winter (1987:383-4). In Babylonian mythology Marduk is the sun god, creator of earth and humans.

process of giving birth is described in terms of a battlefield and the woman in labour is compared to a war hero: 'as a hero who has striven, there she lies in her own blood'.

Peggy Day (Freedman 2000:1358) suggests that *baṯ* is typically translated as 'virgin', but is more accurately understood as 'designating a female who had reached puberty and was potentially able to bear children'. The image of *baṯ* or *bəṯûlaṯ* thus depicts a young woman, 'a maiden' of marriageable age, or figuratively a city or state. Alternatively, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* in Lamentations, although she is central to the scene as the 'pupil in the eye' or the 'navel in the abdomen', her ruin is beyond repair and she is inconsolable (cf. Jer. 4:31). *Yhwh* and others have invaded her privacy and violated her sacred space. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is encouraged to pour out her heart, the centre of her being (Lam. 2:19) before *yhwh,* because the religious nerve centre and the social connections are silent and empty: she is now barren. Would the anger of *yhwh*, which is focusing on *baṯ-ṣiyyôn,* create new life and continue to rescue a devastated community, or would his engagement with his people become eclipsed by anger and destruction? Was this also just a momentary eclipse, so that a new form of relationship could be enacted? These questions are being faced and the emotion is being experienced, as the reader sees the imagery from different standpoints and settings.

There is a gap in the social strata, since the textual prospective husbands have either died or gone into exile, leaving the community barren and sterile. Frustration and false guilt abound, because *bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn* does not follow the traditional social patterns in order to carry on the family line.[159] Despite her supposed virginity she, like the *'almānāh,* has become the cultural scapegoat charged with moral guilt, so that the community can be purged. *Bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn,* like the *'almānāh* is in liminality, outside the social strata: she is both 'virgin' and widowed. Cross-culturally this epitomises situations of plagues such as AIDS, where a cross-section of the community has been wiped out leaving social chaos. The charge of children is left to their grandparents or other members of the family and blame is pinned onto women

[159] See the previous chapter for problems regarding levirate marriage and concerns for survival by carrying on the family line. Both Naomi and Ruth appear to be widows, childless and displaced persons as the result of war.

for spreading the disease (Change 2008).[160] *Bat-ṣiyyôn* is childless, disgraced and in an orphaned state and thus symbolises a physical and emotional conflict.

In summary, the creator God *yhwh-'ĕlōhîm* who, in Genesis 1-2, saw that creation was good, is now beclouding, throwing down, swallowing up and violently taking away all the beauty and creative patterns leaving de-creation in the razed city. God seems to be reversing the act of creation, where he spoke and the created order appeared out of chaos. In Lam. 2:1 *yhwh* does not speak, but he breathes out in anger causing a cloud to enshroud *bat-ṣiyyôn*. He appears to take pleasure in the barrenness of the potential 'mother'. In the world seen to be 'good', there is now chaos instead of order. Instead of the seasonal 'seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, day and night', there is expiry of vitality through untimely death. Instead of the breath of life in birth, there is hunger desperately assuaged through the unspeakable suffering and death of little children. Cannibalism replaces the enjoyment of the provision of food, and emptiness and barrenness in the place of fruitfulness and fecundity. God is projected as alien and uncaring in times of grief and loss. This enigma of de-creation is cited by Josephus in *The Wars of the Jews* (Whiston 1987:736-7) as a 'most unnatural thing'[161] as children are feeding their mothers rather than mothers feeding their children. For *bat-ṣiyyôn*, the conflict is in the death of her future posterity, or in her own personal survival under the angry destruction of *yhwh*.

The delimitation of the external walls of the city, the so-called garden or the dwelling place for the *bat-ṣiyyôn* and *yhwh*, no longer exists and the internal furniture, such as the altar has been desecrated. Intertextual links can be made also to the culturally shameful situations such as the lack of fertility in Biblical women such as Sarah (Gen. 11:30), Rebekah (Gen. 25:21) and Rachel (Gen. 29:31), who were supposedly not in liminality. Hannah (1 Sam. 1:5) also forms a cameo of religious and social barrenness (1 Sam. 2:9-13) of the city and its sanctuary. Brenner and Van Dijk-Hemmes (1993:93) suggest that this is 'an opening for communication with the deity through a bulwark of dominant culture', which lacked vision and priestly fidelity. In other

[160] In many African countries e.g. Botswana the women encounter discrimination and are blamed for the spread of HIV/AIDS to the extent that they fail to seek medical help.

[161] 'A certain woman … snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast she said, "O, thou miserable infant! For whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, and this sedition? ... This famine also will destroy us … Come on; be thou my food … " she slew her son; then roasted him, and ate one half of him. She offered the rest to the seditious varlets saying "Come eat of this food"'.

words, there is withdrawal from the control of society (her husband in a patriarchal setting), political and religious authorities (the priest in a religious community) and an appeal to *yhwh* in a prayer that the men cannot hear and therefore cannot understand.

Just as the energy and creativity of the acrostic are still apparent in its spirit, verse by verse, and in its movement poem by poem, so the pattern of events continues as the dates on the calendar perpetually come around. Despite grief and devastation, life for the person in grief goes on. Time is still divided into days (and nights), weeks (Sabbaths and festivals), months (birth and death), seasons (seedtime and harvest, summer and winter) and years, showing a rhythm of sequence and remembrance. Fertile meaning is superimposed upon the emptiness of the city through the imagery and action of *bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, as she gives a time-scale to seemingly endless suffering, a purposeful pattern given to life and death.[162]

Bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn, therefore, as a fertile female image, retains what Kristeva in her chapter on 'Women's Time' (1986:191) calls 'the repetition and eternity' of a biological cycle. However, for *bəṯûlaṯ baṯ-ṣiyyôn* phases of conception, gestation and bringing to birth are reversed to become miscarriage (2.19 pouring out of the heart), breach (2.13), death (2.21) and the eating of the offspring (2.20): a sense of grief feeding on itself. This mimics the ironical action taken by *yhwh* earlier in the poem, where he 'swallows up the habitations of Jacob' (2:2, 5) and does great damage to the internal workings of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*. The city's time-clock of feasts has been disrupted. The sacred, redemptive and unifying process associated with the Sabbath has been broken. Zion's womb, unable to protect and produce future generations as its walls have been destroyed, becomes a sacred space, which could be associated across time with the Western Wall in 1940, where men and women are seen together weeping as the horrific Holocaust story began to unfold.[163] Thus there is no longer a wall of

[162] Berkowitz essays this topic in Neusner (1994:114-5). Using the example of Bernard Maamud's *The Fixer*, Terence Des Pres effectively discusses the trying experience of unstructured time that was the lot of the prisoners in the concentration camps. He writes: '…in extremity the forms of time dissolve, the rhythms of change and motion are lost, days pass, seasons, years pass and the fixer has no idea how long his ordeal will go on'. There is 'emptiness complete in itself, a suspension in the sameness of identical days, which could last a year or a lifetime'.

[163] Charmé (2005:10, 21) suggests that both the Sabbath and the Western Wall have female symbolism. It is noteworthy that Sabbath is mentioned in connection with the *'almānāh* (Lam. 1:7) and could mean her downfall rather than her Sabbaths and in relation to *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (Lam. 2:6), but it is absent in the chapter on the *geber* (Lam. 3). In the symbolic weeping and healing presence of the

division, but the hope of rebirth. Through the pangs of grief there is a joining together of the members of community, in the struggle for life and against death, so that differences of ethnicity, gender and age are temporarily erased or ignored.

To enable the reader or observer to stay with the human and divine feelings of anger and shame the poet draws on a metaphorical sense of protection through the cloud and new creation hinted at through the refining nature of fire. The survival of such destruction is maintained through an outward expression of grief and lament, which is spontaneous, but at the same time couched in recognisable liturgical terms and a comfortable literary order overflowing with emotional expression.[164] The borders of life and death and day and night are no longer clear. The religious order has also become confused as uninspired prophets speak hollow words in the face of martyrdom: the wisdom of the elders is silenced. Ironically, priests have been slain and can no longer offer sacrifices to *yhwh* on behalf of the people. Could it be that *yhwh* has accepted the death of the priests, prophets, elders and others and the murdered children as a sacrifice for the people?

The structure of the commercial city has been swallowed up, but by razing to the ground its constituent parts, *yhwh*'*s* consideration[165] of her strongholds, palaces, walls, gates, bars and ramparts, builds up new meaning for the following generation. The poet is using literary skill to transfer the experience of anger in grief from the characters in the text, not only to the ideal reader, but also across generations to apply to readers in other eras and cultures. The consideration is in a psychological sense where anger directed towards family, friends, God and oneself, forms an important stage in the bereavement process.

Shekhinah (divine wife and mother) at the Western Wall, women were said to gather water and use it in various folk remedies. Ironically today women are not allowed at the wall. This demonstrates clearly an on-going need for lament which Swinton suggests (2007:105) 'provides us with a language of outrage that speaks against the way things are, but always in the hope that the way things are just now is not the way they will always be'.

[164] Welek (1981:187) discusses how poetry differs from other arts by being energy, not work so that 'sounds in poetry and language have meaning or soul', which makes it possible for 'poetry to express not only actions in succession but also bodies, images, pictures'. The effect is thus not only on the ear and the memory, but also on the imagination. 'Lyrical poetry is the perfect expression of an emotion or representation in the highest euphony of language'.

[165] Psalm 48 builds a picture of Zion, whose total construct is for the celebration of *yhwh's* presence today and for generations to follow. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is now lamenting not only for the present, but that there is no generation to follow.

5.6 Coping Mechanisms for the Symbolic *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*

The concept of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* has not become bounded, her metaphorical image is not dead, but very much alive as there are still aspects that remain unapproachable and inexpressible. Through metaphor and metonymy the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* like the *'almānāh* becomes a dynamic image of survival. She does not escape from facing the situation or asking the questions, but at the same time is able to repeat experiences, such as when she remembers her loneliness. The symbolic *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* uses the situation where everything around her has collapsed through enemy bombardment and the fire of war. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, however, survives her feelings of outrage and shame by blaming *yhwh* and others. She is trying to shape and control what is happening in the theological tension of '*yhwh* as enemy' in a seemingly broken commitment to her. Despite the atmosphere of anger and shame she still has the confidence relationally to approach him to ask for justice and mercy. Her boldness shows that there is not an irreparably broken relationship and that she is open to a new way ahead, which will involve negotiation and change. However, her conflicts are not over yet, so another phase of grief and another image is configured in the next chapter as the warrior (*geber*) in Lamentations 3 develops a strategy to bargain with *yhwh*.

6. The Warrior *geber* Engages in Bargaining in Lamentations 3

> Grief is like a bomber circling round and dropping its bombs each time the circle brings it overhead. C.S. Lewis

6.1 Introducing a Change in Strategy

The *'almānāh* and *bat-ṣiyyôn*, as discussed in previous chapters, are not dead metaphors, but are vibrantly alive in our world today. Although I am not arguing that the ancient text of Lamentations becomes a meta-narrative, nevertheless the variety of metaphors becomes a vital resource in developing theological, sociological and psychological coping strategies as they lead us to stories of human grief and lament. This chapter will continue to use the configuration process of the two-stranded helix and its 'Cross-strands' (Figure 11) to show what happens when the strong man, the

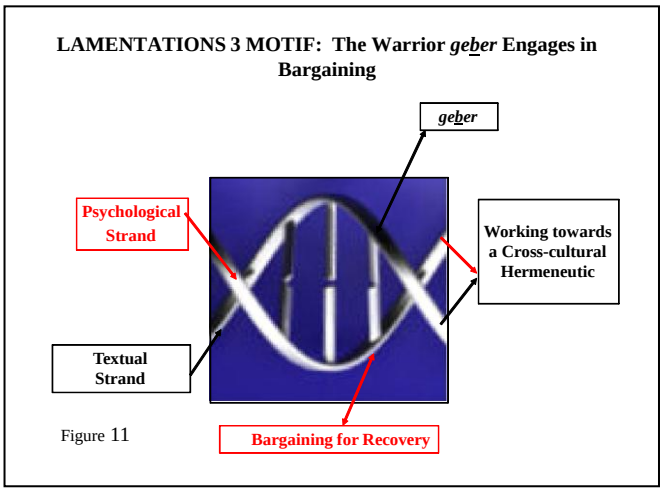


Figure 11

warrior, the metaphorical *geber* of Lamentations 3, engages in bargaining with others, and more significantly with God. The *geber*, despite his suffering, continues to fight back on the front-line in the battle of lament and grief. Once again the textual and psychological worldviews reflect lament patterns, which, as this thesis has shown already, resonate with stories of grief through the ages. The third lyric portrays some major differences from the first two lyrics. The first change concerns the intensification of the acrostic pattern as the 22 Hebrew letters are repeated over three lines (see also 2.6). The second difference is heard in the lament cry, as the lament wail *'êkāh* is replaced by the more self-presenting form of 'I (*'ănî*) am the man (*geber*) who has known affliction (*'ŏnî*)', expressing the intensity of suffering through poetic

assonance of the lament cry *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* as explained in 3.5. There is also a shift from the predominantly female images to the male figure of the *geber*. This chapter will reinforce some of the previous experiences of lament and grief, but will lead to some new responses in lament pattern, voice and action.

The *geber*, like the *'almānāh*, also experiences the aloneness of grief (1:1; 3:28), because of the disaster that has taken place. He is no longer surrounded by key people: his religious and political supporters are either dead or have been exiled. The *'almānāh*, *bat-ṣiyyôn* and the *geber* have all experienced the anger of *yhwh* (1:12; 2:1, 3, 6, 21, 22; 3:43, 3:66) and they lack a sense of national security. The feeling of community has disappeared with the destruction of their city. The protective pillars of family life have crumbled, social integration has broken down and city life is in ruins, just like the charred and damaged buildings now razed to the ground. It is in this setting that the afflicted *geber* makes his complaint (3:1-18) and takes up his aggressive plea for compassion. Harvey (2000:207) suggests that sorrow should be put into words:

> Without the pain that comes from significant loss, there can be no story. Without the story-telling there can be no meaning. Without meaning, there can be no healing.

The *geber* is searching from *aleph* to *tav* for meaning and explanation of his current situation of suffering. He bargains repeatedly with *yhwh* using strong reasoning as a form of motivation through accusation as part of his lament. This is referred to as *Begründung* by critics such as Gunkel, Westermann (1991:69) and Brueggemann (1995:90). He presents God and others with reasons and grounds for action: his complaint gives the basis for change. In the Hebrew lament framework it forms part of the verbal petition to God for mercy. It is a desperate cry from the people to *yhwh*, in the hope that they will be heard and be delivered from their plight. At the same time, it is a phase in the A-Z quest of human grief, which Kübler-Ross defines as 'bargaining', Bowlby refers to as 'protest' and Bowman calls 'defense mobilization'. It is a period in human grief where people in dire straits bargain with those who they deem to have the power (maybe even God) to make the required change, or at least to listen to the complaint. The request could be for an allowance of extra time, or for the consideration of a more lenient sentence. The metaphorical *geber* on the 'Textual

Strand' fights his battle of suffering through the *Begründung* of lament and the 'Cross-strand' on the helix leads to the 'Psychological Strand' and the experiences of the bargaining stage or phase of grief. The *geber* as a wounded warrior surveys the scene, marshals his troops, sets up a defence strategy and launches into a war of words. He draws on covenant language to motivate *yhwh*. He wants *yhwh* to reduce his sentence legally through plea-bargaining and he needs to gain an extension of recovery time in the bargaining process of grief.

During the course of the chapter, it will be demonstrated how the besieged *geber* plans to use *Begründung* as part of his Hebrew lament process, which I am suggesting will bring new insights to the psychological aspect of bargaining in grief. The term *Begründung* can be used in the sense of a political lever, or a plea for mercy in a trial of law, or to engage psychological empathy in a situation of disaster. Initially, it may be just a request for a reasonable hearing or for alleviation in a difficult situation. More radically, it could be the motivation for a complete change of direction. In an experience of conflicting emotions, a person, such as the metaphorical *geber*, often tries to make deals with God and with others, in order to recover, or survive a tragedy. The aim of the negotiation may be an attempt to ease the awful experience of loss and feelings of liminality, postpone the inevitable outcome of illness or disability, or delay the finality of a prison sentence or even death. The sufferer may ask for special dispensation from persons who have influence over the situation, such as a spouse, a lawyer, a politician, a military official, or a medical practitioner and even (maybe secretly) God. In practical terms, it may be a request for an extension of time, so that a certain target can be reached, a demand for extra leniency so that a particular task can be accomplished, or for certain treatment to take effect.[166] This could be accompanied by a promise to 'turn over a new leaf', to be better behaved, in order to get 'parole' for good behaviour, or by debating the question, as the Psalmist does, 'How long?'

> How long, O Lord; will you ignore me forever?
> How long will you hide your face from me?
> How long will I have care on my mind, grief in my heart all day?
> How long will my enemy have the upper hand? (Ps. 13:2-3)

[166] See Backer et al. (1982:22) for citations of patients wishing for an extension of time in connection with events and projects e.g. to write a book or finish a course of treatment.

In a legal case the term is called 'plea bargaining'[167] when a mutually satisfactory settlement takes place. The defendant agrees to plead guilty to a given charge, sometimes to a lesser charge, hoping and expecting that by co-operation the sentence may be reduced. Bowman (2000:34) in her work to assist teenagers who struggle with injuries and health issues, calls this stage of grief denial: 'defence mobilisation'. An example of this is typically the under-estimation or under-statement of the impact of the accident or injury on the person's capability. Saying 'I can still play in the match on Saturday', may be a way of coping with the shock of what has happened but is also a way of not losing face by denying the effects of a disability. She suggests, that by bargaining, those suffering as a result of sports injuries, for example, will be protected from being submerged in anxiety and fear. Bowman goes on to explain that in a fight against the realisation of the impact of what has happened, young people may set unrealistic goals for themselves. Their goal may be to overcome their feelings of defeat and adjust to unexpected disability and/or health problems. In essence, *Begründung* is the process used by the *geber* and those in similar straits, to persuade those perceived to have power to understand or make the required change.

6.2 Repeated Shots Which Reverberate and Ricochet

As observed in 2.6.1, the marching style of the *aleph, aleph, aleph* of the opening stanza of the third lyric has the effect of allowing the reader to take time to get in step with the acrostic pattern. Tennyson demonstrates intertextually how a carefully constructed frame of words can lead the reader into a 'safe and calm place' where sadness can be expressed and emotions can overflow:

> But for the unquiet heart and brain,
> A use in measured language lies,
> The sad mechanic exercise,
> Like dull narcotics, numbing pain. *In Memoriam A.H.H. (1850)*

The regularity of the more intense acrostic form in Lamentations 3 and its alphabetic sequence representing the steady forward movement of everyday events in life, is interrupted by the constant reverberation of the soldier's war cries, as they ricochet

[167] Plea bargaining is defined as 'a practice whereby a defendant in criminal proceedings agrees to plead guilty to a (sometimes reduced) charge, in exchange for the prosecution's cooperation in securing a more lenient sentence or an agreement to drop other charges' (OED).

around. The *geber* immediately resorts to launching bold accusations, which sometimes overflow the measured literary conventions of the poetic acrostic and sometimes ignore the theological traditions of the lament mechanics. The *aleph aleph aleph* of the personal pronouns:

3:1	*'ănî*	'I' am the man (*geber*)
3:2	*'ôṯî*	'me' he drove on and on
3:3	*'ak bî*	'on none but me'

show repeatedly a defensiveness of a very strong and insistently steady pace in the 'I' … 'me' … 'on none but me' of the complaint of the Hebrew *geber*.

From the first encounter with the so-called warrior who is suffering, the reader is confronted with a sense of uncertainty as to who he is and a puzzle to find out what is happening in his world. As discussed earlier in 3.5 the *geber* is using the traditionally authoritative presentation of himself as someone, who despite his power and good social standing, has been hurt. He uses the poetic first person voice to let out an onomatopoeic cry of *'ănî … 'ŏnî* - 'I am the one who has seen affliction' (3:1 NRSV). Right from the start he fights back in self-defence: as O'Connor (2001:1048) suggests, he aims 'to speak, to give voice, to testify from inside the pain of his affliction'. He has the compelling presence of a man whom Chouraqui translates as: *moi, le brave* (Lam. 3:1), thus suggesting that the voice is of a courageous, although wounded warrior, who has survived trauma, but whose honour is at stake. As with the repetitive lament cry (*'êkāh*) in Lamentations 1, 2 and 4, so the assonance of *'ănî … 'ŏnî* [168] reverberates throughout Lamentations 3, emphasising the personal nature of the warrior's troubles. This cry is once more a form of *Begründung*, an attempt to induce God and others to listen to him empathetically.

The *geber*'s strategy is to justify himself and to bargain with *yhwh* as the sounds of war ricochet around him. He uses his skill and knowledge in verbal combat to train and organise his task force. He aims three memorable 'bullet' points *ṭôb ṭôb ṭôb* (3:25-27) to persuade others to have courage and be wise in combat with *yhwh*:

[168] 3:6 *hôšîbanî*, 3:11 *śāmanî*, 3:15 *hisbiî … 'ănî hirwanî*, 3:16 *hikpisanî*, and 3:63 *'ănî*, 3:1 *'ŏnî*, 3:19 *zəkōr 'ŏnî*.

3:25 *ṭôb* it is good to trust

3:26 *ṭôb* it is good to wait

3:27 *ṭôb* it is good to bear the yoke in youth

The *geber* takes advantage of the repetitive nature of the acrostic letter *ṭēt* and traditional formats for patterns of lament. He draws the word *ṭôb* from an arsenal of word weapons about the 'good' and from piled-up sayings of wisdom. He recalls in his own mind *yhwh*'s faithful nature and compassionate attitude. The *geber* is looking to restore qualities which have disappeared because of the fall of Jerusalem.[169] The alliance of love, affection and compassion between *yhwh* and his people has been broken, so he utters a sapiential[170] prayer, in which his aim is to persuade God and motivate his troops to expect a good outcome. He argues that because of their previous good alliance, *yhwh* will be persuaded to listen and have mercy. Guest (2006:395) refers to this prayer as the 'stock-in-trade' language of lament, but Dobbs-Allsopp (2002:122) calls it 'a litany of suffering', which becomes more than just an individual experience as it spreads across culture. Its effectiveness as a linguistically coded litany will be explored later in the chapter through a more detailed comparison with other examples of grief patterns and laments.

Although Gottwald (1988:647) notes that the threefold repetition of 'good' appears at the centre of the work and is the strongest statement of faith and hope, nevertheless, at this point, the *ṭôb* 'technique' has not worked, since *yhwh* has not surrendered to the *geber*. Not willing to be defeated, the *geber* changes his plan of action: he pleads for recognition of justice through the threefold repetition of the consequential 'for' (*kî*), which is a form of plea-bargaining. He takes advantage of the *kaph* rhythm of the acrostic by using *kî kî kî* (3:31-33) as missiles to launch well-crafted legal sentences, which aim at the just deserts process of deed and consequence:

[169] Morla (2004:272-281) suggests that this restoration will be accomplished by *yhwh* because he is a God who is ultimately good and wants to express this in the re-building of the structures of the community.

[170] Dyrness (1979:19) notes that Hebrew wisdom includes short sayings (Proverbs), longer reflections on life (Ecclesiastes) and dialogues, which deal with the problems of life (Job). I am proposing that the *geber* is wanting to draw on wisdom and its intensely practical art of being skilful and successful in life in order to bargain with *yhwh*.

3:31 *kî* for the Lord does not reject forever

3:32 *kî* for he afflicts then pardons

3:33 *kî* for the Lord does not willingly bring grief or affliction to a man

This also misses the mark, but the *geber* has a further strategy, which is to use empathy as a form of persuasion. The intensity of his tears is mentioned as part of the body of the text of the *pēh* acrostic stanza (3:48). Then as if to emphasise the incessant character, his weeping eyes are mentioned twice as part of the *'ayin* acrostic stanza (3:49, 51) interspersed with the hope that *yhwh* will eventually be persuaded to look down from heaven (3:50) and see what is happening:

3:48 my eyes (*'ênî*) shed streams of water

3:49 (*'ênî*) my eyes shall flow without cease

3.50 until the Lord looks down

3:51 (*'ênî*) my eyes have brought me grief

These outbursts of weeping are expressed within the poetic acrostic and the traditionally 'controlled' patterns of lament, but are also the continuous sobbing of grief which breaks through the acrostic. However, this mixture of traditional pattern and spontaneous interjection also fails. The sobbing and emotional expressions of lament and grief, as yet, do not draw out empathy or motivate God to change his attitude. The warrior finally brings out his back-up plan. He asks for vengeance and for the legal restoration of 'an eye for an eye' form of justice. He reminds *yhwh* that since his requests are still unanswered, it is now time to ask for revenge on them (*lāhem*), that is on those who have become his enemies. His tactics no longer follow the strict pattern of the *tav* acrostic stanza (3:64-66), the mechanical exercise has been broken in order to express his plan of revenge. He accusingly suggests ways in which God should deal with his enemies:

3:64 Give them (*lāhem*) O Lord, their deserts
According to their deeds.

3:65 Give them (*lāhem*) anguish of heart;
Your curse be upon them (*lāhem*)!

In summary, the *geber* defends himself as he nurses his wounds and uses *Begründung* tactics to persuade God. He pleads legal sentences, sheds tears to gain empathy and

keeps up the fight for his people by repeatedly sounding out the death wish on his enemies. Therefore, the *geber*'s battle strategy of sharp shots in self-defence, of persuasive words, of emotional coercion and of retribution and revenge reverberate throughout the Hebrew Bible and are echoed in troubled areas of the world today. I am arguing, that, like the *geber* in this chapter, human beings defend themselves in situations of loss, war and disaster by using well-known known strategies of motivation and accusation.

6.3 Guises of the *geber*

So who is the *geber* and who does he represent across time and culture? Normally, as a warrior or soldier, he would act under authority and would not be afraid of conflict, but would be willing to fight for his country and his people. However, in Lamentations 3, despite his self-presentation, the *geber* is in a weak situation. He is wounded. His king is in exile and his God (*yhwh*) is on the side of the enemy. His defence is to show his battle scars as credentials, muster up a few supporters and fight back. As Lanaham (1974:45) suggests, the *geber* 'was led into defeat by an officer who wished him to be defeated'. However, the *geber* in his metaphorical role, challenges the prestige, power, justice and reputation of his God *yhwh.* This links back to the cognitive dissonance[171] of *yhwh/'ādōnāy* as enemy and the question of inviolability once more becomes paramount.

The Hebrew *geber* (Lam. 3:1, 27, 35, 39)[172] takes on different guises as the 'man', the 'strong one' or the 'warrior' in his rhetoric of persuasion, just as *Qoheleth* is called by the various names of: 'son of David', 'king in Jerusalem' and 'the Preacher' (Eccl. 1.1). Christianson (2007:5-15) notes of *Qoheleth* that the 'spirit of his persona' has impact on the reader.[173] Similarly, the mind-set of the afflicted *geber* and his use of hyperbole and vivid imagery draws others into his 'fighting talk', as he negotiates for

[171] See Excursus on '*yhwh/'ādōnāy* as Enemy' in the previous chapter (Lam. 1:15, 2:3-5, 22). Gottwald (1954:50-1) suggests that cognitive dissonance relates to the tension of the theological expectation that *yhwh* would forgive the people after their recent repentance and reform under King Josiah and the actual reality of catastrophic destruction. Albrektson (1963:219) sees the disparity between the widespread belief of inviolability and the guarantee of the deity's protection and security and the actual destruction.

[172] The *geber* is defined as man as distinct from woman, or from God and is associated with strength (Ed. Clines, DCH Vol. II, 1995:313).

[173] Christianson adds that *Qoheleth* the philosopher is also 'wrought by melancholy', a 'preacher of joy', 'true to life' and 'pious and just' (Eccl. 7:27, 12:8), and *Qoheleth* is 'a collector (of sentences)' (BDB 2003:875).

more time, hopes for a lesser sentence and pleads for another chance (3:19-39). Moreover, his intensely personal complaint (3:1-18) develops into an inclusive communal lament (3:40-47).

Despite the fact that the first person voice of *yhwh* is absent in all five Lamentations the *geber* uses four different names for God. He exposes his inner being to *yhwh*, the name of the God who enters into relationship with his people (3:18, 22, 24, 25, 26, 40 50, 55, 59 61, 64, 66). He calls on God as *'ădōnāy* (3:31, 36, 37, 58)[174] and demands the witness of the Most High God (*'elyôn* 3:35, 38), as he pleads with the God in heaven (*'el-'ēl baššāmāyim* 3:41) for himself and for the people. Although the *geber* expects that God will hear and that his judgement will be lenient, it could also be argued that *yhwh* is suffering the public degradation of a broken engagement with his people and joins in the emotional expressions of *'êkāh* and *'ănî ... 'ŏnî*. *Yhwh* was absent and therefore accused as the prime cause of the broken engagement with humanity. He is also blamed for the breach of commitment, which has resulted in society becoming fragmented. *Yhwh* has deserted his military responsibilities of leadership as Lord and King and as a result his people are in rebellion, suffering and chaos. The *geber* represents his community before God in the more universal image as he is named 'the living man' (*'ādām ḥāy* and *geber* 3:39). He campaigns not only for himself (*geber*), but also for various socially structured groups,[175] such as the family of human beings (*'ādām*), living creation (*ḥāy*) and a variety of communities with whom he identifies.

6.3.1 'Kin of Adam'

As *'ādām*, he represents humankind, both male and female, all peoples of the human race, created in God's image, with the capacity to relate to God. He tries out well-known covenant language that had sealed the relationship between God and his people in order to obtain some physical comfort and a spate of emotional relief. He

[174] Van Gemerren (1997:275) notes that *'ădōnāy* may have a more universal sense in its meaning 'Lord of all', thus the universal authority of God may be the basic sense of the word.

[175] In Lamentations 3 the metaphorical *'ādām ḥāy geber* represents all people (3:14) and makes links with humanity (3:33), all the prisoners of the earth (3:34), the peoples (3:45), my poor people (3:48, see Chapter 7), and the maidens of my city (3:51 see previous chapter). Gottwald (1987, 1985:26) suggests that biblical writings were rooted in interacting groups of people in such social structures as family, economy, government, law, war, ritual, and religious belief. Lewin (1958:197) suggests that the question of group decision lies at the intersection of many basic problems of group life and individual psychology.

bargains for a hearing and a way to return to a compassionate settlement, so that corporal injury and punishment is reduced by drawing on justice and mercy. He carefully negotiates terms to ensure that human rights (3:35) are not violated and that fair treatment is given to social concerns. The time scale is made urgent by poetic repetition, but arriving at the end of the lyric it lacks closure. The feelings of grief and lament expressed by the use of *Begründung* by the *geber*, whom Knox calls the 'kin of Adam', link with the needs of human beings today as they bargain in experiences of grief and try to close down issues of suffering and hurt.

The feelings of numbness and desolation (Lam. 3:11, 47), which are so prevalent in the early period of grief,[176] are still present. The sense of taste is affected by dryness and a discomfort in the mouth. This acrid taste and bitterness (Lam. 3:15) could be experienced also in a state of drunkenness, or during an illness where the liver, kidneys or gall bladder are malfunctioning. Both physically and emotionally, the *geber* becomes depressed as he lacks strength. He has drowning sensations in his head. He is so debilitated that his skin and flesh have wasted away over his broken bones. He feels depressed and discouraged so he no longer has the heart to fight or protect himself from those who do him harm: a reminder of Hezekiah's illness (Isa. 38:13) where he accuses God of breaking his bones like a lion. There is a smell of death in the air, another reminder of the vulnerability of human beings (*'ādām*) as an ephemeral part of the living (*ḥāy*) creation.

6.3.2 *Ḥāy*: the Whole of Creation

As *ḥāy*, he forms part of the whole of living creation in the fight for survival. He has to face the inevitability of changes in the environment, whether through external influences, or through pain, death or extinction. He heaps metaphor on metaphor from a stockpile of hostile images. He recounts stories of human and animal conflict, where reversal takes place as he is hunted like an animal. He is snared (3:52), trapped (3:53) and shot at (3:12). He sees wild animals lurking ready to pounce on him and crush him as their prey (3:10-11). Even worse, *yhwh* no longer protects him, but has

[176] See also previous chapter and the *'almānāh* as a forlorn woman (Lam.1:13), as deserted gates of the city (Lam. 1:4) and as children or territories (Lam. 1:16).

become *sauvage* and instead, like a bear or a lion,[177] is hunting him down. There is an uncomfortable imbalance between his previously established environment and his present chaotic world, which has totally collapsed and become dehumanised. Thus the use of this animal imagery,[178] hunting equipment and expressions of violence,[179] showing him as the hunted rather than the hunter, are used to portray his intense physical torment and public humiliation.

Other intertextual incidents in the Hebrew Bible include the totally disorientated King Nebuchadnezzar, who was driven insane (Dan. 4:28-34, 5:21). For a time he was isolated from other human beings, as he became exposed to the elements and lived and ate like animals. He even looked like them, since his hair grew and became like the feathers of birds and his nails grew like talons. Similarly, the psalmist in Psalm 22[180] becomes prey to the predator: he is hunted down for no reason in a visually violent and anguished prayer. So for the *ge<u>b</u>er* his whole being is experiencing physical pain from wounds inflicted on him by the external world. In his loneliness, he is bereft of peace. His shattered bones (3:4) and broken teeth (3:16) are the result of combat with *yhwh*. His battle-scarred body brings to mind the sunken gates and smashed bars of the broken-down buildings in the destroyed world of the *ba<u>t</u>-ṣiyyôn*. It is a time of extreme deprivation; a period of siege, when, as suggested by Peter Martyr (Shute 2006:119-120), the people kneaded dough in holes dug in the ground. This resulted in 'bread so dirty - crammed with sand and stones - that, while eating the bread I [the *ge<u>b</u>er*] broke my teeth'. The *ge<u>b</u>er* is so hungry that he is glad to eat

[177] See also Proverbs 28:15 where a lion and a bear are likened to 'a wicked man ruling a helpless people'. Job (10:16) suggests that God (*'el-'ĕlōah*) takes pride in hunting him like a lion. The psalmist (Ps. 7:2; 10:9; 22:14) looks to God for protection from the enemy, who is seen metaphorically as a lion. Hosea depicts *'ĕlōhîm* as a lion, a leopard or a bear, who will attack his people because they have forgotten him.

[178] In Lamentations 3: a lurking bear (3:10), a lion in hiding (3:11), like a bird (3:53) and by comparison in Psalm 22 a worm (22:7), strong bulls of Bashan (22:13), a ravening and a roaring lion (22:14), dog(s) (22:17, 21), lions (22:22), unicorns (22:22).

[179] He is bargaining from his arsenal of arguments against the use of weapons and violence against him. He is combating the impact that they will have long-term. According to the *Message* version, *yhwh* manacles the *ge<u>b</u>er*'s hands, shackles his feet (3:7) and tracks him down him like a prowling bear and a lion ready to pounce (3:10). He takes his bow and arrows and uses him as target practice and shoots him in the stomach with arrows from his quiver (3:12-13), rips him to pieces (3:11), grinds his face into the gravel and pounds him in the mud (3:16). He stomps down hard on luckless prisoners (3:34), cuts down people without mercy (3:43), hunts him down like a bird (3:52), throws him into a pit and pelts him with stones (3:53).

[180] Davis (1992:97) comments that in Psalm 22 there is bitter irony in the picture of the Holy One comfortably, but precariously, ensconced upon antique praises, now dry and fragile as dust, while the faithful psalmist mouths vain cries for help.

whatever he can to fill his empty belly, but physically he is in poor shape and by eating and breaking his teeth he makes eating even more difficult - but he survives!

6.3.3 The Wounded *geber*

As the *geber*,[181] he represents the one who suffers, but who bargains to become the wounded-healer. He fights on behalf of himself and of the groups of people with whom he identifies. Lewin (1997:107) proposes that 'one of the basic ideas of belonging is that the same individual generally belongs to many groups', such as a family, an economic sector, a religious group, a political party and so on. William James cited by Killian (1958:459) posits that there are 'as many social selves … as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinions he [she] cares'. So the 'living man' (*ādām ḥāy geber* Lam. 3:39) identifies with others through his various guises as a suffering human being, a creature going through change and a warrior who fights back.

6.3.4 Representing the 'Prisoners of the Earth'

Despite the fact that he is despised by 'everyone' (3:14, 45 MSG, CEV),[182] he shows compassion for 'all the prisoners of the earth' (3:34), 'my people' (3:48 NRSV),[183] and 'daughter towns' (3:51 AMP).[184] The *geber* understands the situations in which 'all the prisoners of the earth' find themselves. He, too, as the suffering man of Lamentations is shut out (3:8) and walled in (3:7, 9). Compared with the open space experience of the *bat-ṣiyyôn*, where she is able to explore the depths of her grief, the *geber* feels surrounded in a seemingly unmerited tragedy, intertextually like Joseph cast into a pit by his brothers (Gen. 37:20-29). Reimer (2002:552) also points out that the *geber*'s experience of feeling 'cut off from [the] source of life from God' resonates with the experience of the prophet Jeremiah in the dungeon (Jer. 18:20) and the prophet Ezekiel in his visualisation of dry bones and dead bodies coming to life

[181] The term *geber* is also used in other connections, such as with Job as 'a male' in birth and in association with kings and counsellors in death (Job 3:3, 13-14). It is also used for 'menfolk' in worship (Ex. 10:11), for 'men on foot' during the exodus (Ex. 12:37), in a pre-monarchical institution of tribes, clans, households and 'man by man' (Josh. 7:14, 17, 18), and a 'head count' of Priests and Levites (1 Chron. 23:3, 24:4).

[182] *Hā 'ammîm* is also translated as 'the world' (GNB), 'peoples' (TAN, NRSV) or 'nations' (MSG) or 'my neighbours' (KNO).

[183] *bat-'ammî* is also translated as 'my poor people' (TAN) or 'daughter of my people' (KJV) or 'poor Sion' (KNO) and other interpretations, which are addressed in the next chapter.

[184] *bənôt 'îrî* is also translated as 'Jerusalem's daughters' (KNO) or 'maidens of my city' (TAN). See also Chapter 5 for finer details about Daughter Zion.

(Ezek. 37). Friebel (1999:426) comments that Ezekiel and Jeremiah take on a form of vicarious suffering in the sense of suffering 'along with' others rather than 'instead of' others. These two prophets are deeply involved with their people in an empathetic role to the point of suffering and when functioning in the divine role they feel the depicted divine emotion. Likewise, the *geber* does not give up the idea of a compassionate rescue. He asks *yhwh* to listen to his breathing (Lam. 3:56); at least he still has the breath of life, as he cries from his dungeon of grief. So the *geber* suffers as a man who is acting the role of sufferer. Like Job, he lets go of his emotion in a controlled way in the privacy of dark places, hidden behind an enclosure of hedges (Job 3:5, Lam. 3:6-7) and sealed in a dungeon (Lam. 3:55). Cook (1998:285-308), who claims to look at bereavement specifically from a male point of view, suggests that many males in bereavement develop the skill of compartmentalising their thoughts. They shut down memories that bring distressing emotions in their wake. They fill their minds with other things or actively distance themselves from the home and reminders of the loss. They release their emotions only in the privacy of their car, or garage, or garden shed, where partners, families and others cannot see the extent of their distress. In a similar way, the *geber* and others like him, may feel secure in the confines of familiar territory, tradition or the structure of liturgy. He and others may need such boundaries as a safe way of facing prejudices and remembering the past when surrounded by death and in a situation of emotional shut-down. Cook also found that 'men rationalised personal loss into more general evidence of broad politics, religious and philosophical explanations of life and fate, whereas the mothers tended to see their son's death as evidence of the basic pointlessness and chaos of the world'. It is noteworthy that the *geber* does not mention specific family members, friends or colleagues.

The *geber* is caught in a snare like a bird (3:52), weighed down in chains, blocked in (3:7, 9), stoned,[185] left to expire in a pit (3:53) and panicked to death (3:47) by enemies, who shout abuse at him (3:46). This imagery of entrapment is also strongly present in the Negro Spiritual song 'Slavery Chain':

[185] Stoning was the usual Hebrew form of execution (Ex. 19:13; Lev. 20:27; Lk. 20:6; Acts 7:58). The prosecution witness (the law required at least two) has to cast the first stone (Deut. 13:9, cf. Jn. 8:7), and afterwards if the victim lived the spectators carried out the sentence and the body was suspended until sunset (Deut. 21:23).

I did tell him how I suffer,
In de dungeon and de chain,
And de days were with head bowed down,
And my broken flesh and pain.[186]

Guest (2006:400) notes the *geber*'s hyperbole and suggests that:

> conventional lament language and imagery provides a rich, timeless, generic vocabulary of assault that can be applied subsequently to a specific instance of oppression and its concomitant physical, psychological and emotional distress.

Guest (2006:399) adds, more specifically, concerning sexual orientation, that: 'Lamentations reverberates with the sheer unpredictability that gays and lesbians face in everyday life … an overall feeling of being hunted down and being utterly trapped in the present' (3:7-9).

The *geber*, therefore, as 'all prisoners of the earth', battles with his new limitations, like a person, who in solitary confinement, has lost his or her vision and in the blackness has to learn to cope with the 'subterranean' oppression of dark places (3:2, 6). Hull (1990:39) in his struggle with blindness puts it this way:

> If I were to accept this thing [blindness], if I were to acquiesce, then I would die. It would be as if my ability to fight back, my will to resist were broken. On the other hand, not to acquiesce, not to accept, seems futile. What I am refusing to accept is a fact. This then is the dilemma. I am in the presence of an unacceptable reality. I must be content with little answers.

Therefore, the *geber* forms part of different human groupings, such as: all peoples of the human race (*'ādām*), the whole of living creation (*ḥāy*), a fighting warrior who becomes a wounded healer (*geber*) and a prisoner of the earth (*kōl 'ašîrê 'āreṣ*) who has compassion. The metaphorical *geber* has a breadth of inclusiveness, but also an air of uncertainty.

[186] This song was created about 1865 and quoted in the Spirituals and the Blues by James Cone (1972).

6.3.5 The Ambiguous *geḇer*

The imagery of the *geḇer*, presented as a soldier, symbolising his duty to authorities or those in power, may raise questions in the text of Lamentations and with the reader. The warrior *geḇer* has been wounded by *yhwh*, who, as a skilled archer, has drawn arrows from his quiver, bent his bow and with careful aim has hit his target with deadly accuracy (3:12-13, 2:4), but in so doing he has wounded a vulnerable creature, a human being. As Scarry (1985:16) observes, 'weaponry and woundedness are bound together ... weapons mean pain'. There is a battle taking place, although there is no mention of a sword or blood. The eyes of *yhwh* are focused and dispassionate as he targets the *geḇer*, more like those of a trained bowman than the tear-filled eyes of a compassionate God. In the process of prefiguration, readers come to the imagery of the text from their own background.

Roland Barthes (1993:116), in a setting of 'Frenchness' and 'militariness', explains this process in his analysis of a picture printed on the front cover of *Paris Match*, where 'a young negro in a French uniform is saluting with his eyes uplifted, probably fixed on a fold of the tri-colour' (Figure 12). Barthes suggests that it is the ambiguity

Figure 12 A Young Negro in French Uniform is Saluting

that ‘causes us to understand something and it imposes it on us’. Barthes continues to explain that the soldier in the *Paris Match* picture also represents different social selves of ‘French nationality’, of ‘the military’, of ‘race’, of ‘loyalty to the flag’, of child soldiers, as it symbolizes duty to authority.[187] Likewise we have discussed the fluidity of the ‘I am the man who suffered’ and reflected on aspects of the imagery of the warrior *geber*. He represents various human social groups (*’ādām*), creation in general (*ḥāy*), a soldier on the front-line fighting for his people, a wounded warrior suffering on behalf of others (*geber*), a prisoner awaiting sentence (*kōl ’ašîrê ’āreṣ*) and a survivor of disaster.

6.4 Reconnaissance and Reinforcements

The *geber* as a warrior takes stock of the situation and looks for reinforcements when he feels that things are slipping out of control. Despite the *geber*’s idea to motivate others through the wisdom sayings, many of them, like himself, have been wounded, and many more have been killed or exiled. The *geber* still finds he needs additional resources in order to deal with the changes. He feels isolated, like the *’almānāh* in the loss of her husband and in her isolation from society. He experiences fiery anger, like the *bat-ṣiyyôn,* who has lost her beauty and strength of leadership. In the disastrous war, the *geber* has lost his country to the enemy. Throughout Lamentations 3 there is no mention of king, princes or princesses, prophets, priests or sanctuary, children, fathers or elders, habitations, walls or strongholds. Could this be a sign that times have changed, especially as Judah, Jacob and Zion are no longer mentioned by name and the Sabbath and the law have disappeared from the scene? The creative symbols of garden, mother and suckling, all of which epitomise the idea of protection and safety, have vanished from the text and been replaced by the *geber*’s semantic struggle.

It is not surprising therefore, that his acrostic bullet points are neither heard nor acted upon, although the *geber* is still working towards a conciliatory way of peace through

[187] Barthes is struck by the ‘purposeful mix of Frenchness and militariness’ depicted in the *Paris Match* picture (Figure 12, p.160). Barthes continues, ‘it signifies to me that France is a great Empire, that all her sons without any colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro serving his so-called oppressors’. I am suggesting that the image of the *geber* is also steeped in an anonymous ideology, which contributes to the way in which he represents himself and others. It also affects his relationships with his God and the world.

negotiation and positive re-engagement from both sides of the battle line. In short, he presents himself as the one who grieves over the destruction of the city. He complains about the enemy's tactics and marshals the activation of *Begründung* through reasoning, accusation and reproach in order to motivate God and others to have mercy on him and on his people. The *geber* reasons from known grief and lament patterns; he uses recognisable cries and defends himself in different forms. He struggles with a lack of resources, but he is also aware of the enemy's strategies, as he fires out accusations throughout the lyric, complaining of unrelieved darkness (3:2, 6), weakening through physical wounds (3:16), constraint of imprisonment (3:7), the daunting presence of wild animals (3:10), the accurate aim of weaponry (3:12-13) and treatment constantly causing him hardship and depression (3:1-20). He also preys on the enemy's weak points, so he cites existing precedent and well-established contracts and treaties as part of his negotiation for change. He knows that *yhwh* has a history of being merciful and kind. His experience is that if one waits patiently and searches for *yhwh* in the heat of the battle, he *will* rescue him. As part of his motivation he uses legal terms with reference to his opponents and accuses them of denying his rights (3:35), wronging him (3:36) and trapping him without cause (3:52). He pleads that *yhwh* as judge should defend his rights (3:59) and in vengeance mete out the sentence that his plaintiffs deserve (3:64). The *geber* as a warrior knows the rules of engagement, so he employs the bargaining language of prayer with *yhwh*. His aim is to motivate *yhwh* and others to hear his complaint, to reduce his suffering, give him more time to recover and then speak or act in a way that defends his rights.

6.5 The *geber*'s Analysis of Bargaining Techniques

The *geber* and his first readers may select from a choice of bargaining techniques from a background of lament traditions.

6.5.1 Straight Line – Deed and Consequence

The form of *Begründung* employed by Moses at the time of the exodus could be applied, where two-way communication activated his role both as leader of the people and also as one under divine authority. His complaint is why (*māh* 3:39) has God mistreated the people? What wrong have they done? Why is God apparently absent? He does not appear to have removed the hardship (cf. Ex. 5:22-23). Although the questions resonate quite clearly with *bat-ṣiyyôn*'s strategy of blaming an angry *yhwh*

for her shameful situation in Lam. 2:13 (see 3.4 *māh*) there is also a link with the *geber*'s technique of *Begründung* and the accusation 'of God against God'.[188]

The thrust of Lamentations 3 on the 'Textual Strand' is that the sufferer is complaining of an unfair deal and is bargaining for relief from pain and seemingly senseless suffering. Likewise on the 'Psychological Strand' Kübler Ross suggests bargaining is an important part of grieving. Clark (2004:164-170) also recognises this experience in his psychiatric work with grieving adults. He suggests that during such a phase, which he calls 'preoccupation', the bereaved 'need to feel that their grief is speakable and hearable' (2004:168). Bowlby (1961:317-40) in his psychoanalysis of mourning, and Archer (1999:24) in his comments on the psychological changes which occur in grief, agree that periods of yearning and searching, interspersed with bursts of anxiety and anger, are part of mourning and as part of the process of grief could last for months or even years. Ricoeur uses a hermeneutical arc to allow time for understanding and interpretation and to show the dynamics of life as movement in his process of prefiguration-configuration-refiguration. Westermann shows how the process of the Biblical lament has developed into five components, some of which may be useful to the *geber*.

6.5.2 Westermann's Dynamic Circle

Westermann (1981:67-69) suggests that the plea found in the lament psalms forms part of the cycle of plea to praise and is the reason for accusation in the judgment speech form of prophetic literature. Westermann (1981:52, 64, 168-70) proposes a dynamic circle of Address-Lament-Confession of trust-Petition-Vow of Praise, based on the Babylonian psalm structure of Address-Praise-Lament-Petition-Vow of Praise (in Albertz 2003:148).[189] Westermann stresses that there needs to be an utter breakdown of old certainties, a fully explored experience of rage, bitterness and

[188] Widmer (2004:78-79) explains that although Moses' prayer bears clear resemblance to the lament psalms, the narrative context adds other important aspects to it. Moses appears to have forgotten *yhwh'*s warning that the mission will not be a straight forward success i.e. that the King of Egypt will not let you go (Ex. 3:19) and Pharaoh's heart will be hardened (Ex. 4:21).

[189] Broyles (1989:13-14, 35-52) uses similar components with the examples of Psalm 13 as an individual lament and Psalm 80 as a communal lament. Broyles claims that 'a lament psalm is not lamentation because it does more than bemoan hardship. It seeks change'. I am arguing that in the Lamentations there is not only the bemoaning of hardship, but the time to move from lamentation to praise has not yet come. For more details on the transition process from mourning rituals to celebration see 8.5 and G.A. Anderson (1991).

distress before there can be any useful orientation. His analysis of the plea involving the three subjects of the foes, the 'we' and *yhwh* , in Psalm 79, is as follows:

Address	O God, heathens have entered your domain (nations NRSV)	79:1
	(**the foes** … turned Jerusalem into ruins	79:1
Lament	(**we** have become the butt of our neighbours	79:4
	(***yhwh*** – How long, O Lord, will you be angry forever?	79:5
Confession of trust	we, Your people, the flock You shepherd	79:13
	(**Hear –** let your compassion come swiftly	79:8
Petition	(**Save -** Help us, O God , our deliverer	79:9
	(**Punish –** Pay back our neighbours sevenfold	79:12
Vow of Praise	We shall glorify you forever … tell your praises	79:13

My argument is that sustained praise in Lamentations is notoriously absent. Unlike Psalm 79, the *geber* does not follow through to praise, but stays with vindication and vengeance right until the last stanza of the acrostic. The *geber* in his plea of *Begründung* seems to be a major exception to the plea-praise circle of lament. He expresses the tensions between the promise of reconciliation (3:22-3) and the dashed hope of restoration and continued destruction (3:40-3) but does not reach the vow of praise.

6.5.3 Brueggemann's *Begründung* in Plea-Petition

Brueggemann (1995:21) applies Ricoeur's hermeneutical arc and the components orientation-disorientation-re-orientation, positing that the function of the psalm of lament is to move people through a sequence of plea to praise. Brueggemann (1995:90) suggests, as form critics before him, that a motif of 'bargaining' also occurs in the plea-petition cycle of Israel's laments. He (1995:140) explains that bargaining (*Begründung*) establishes the basis for appeal such as:

> And now, O Lord God, fulfil Your promise to Your servant and his house forever; and do as You have promised. And may Your name be glorified forever, in that men

> [*sic*] will say, 'The Lord of Hosts is God over Israel'; and may the house of Your servant David be established before you (2Sam. 7:25-26).

Brueggemann (1984:54-5) suggests five components of a plea-petition strategy of psalmic disorientation where the two partners, *yhwh* and his people, are 'engaged in recurring subject matter that concerns both of them critically' (2009:14). The psalmic plea is: Address to God-Complaints-Petition-Motivations (*Begründung*)-Imprecation. Brueggemann (1984:72) highlights the conflict of vengeance and compassion in Psalm 79, explaining that it is a 'psalm of disorientation'. His analysis is as follows:

Address to God	as interested party	79:1-4
Complaints	listed	79:1-4
Petition	extraordinary appeal to mobilise his anger	79:6
Motivations (*Begründung*)	his compassion, his salvation, his great arm	79:9-11
Imprecation	an urgent, militant petition to repay *sevenfold*	79:12

According to Brueggemann (1984:73) this process of lament takes place before 'yearning for new orientation' (v. 13) and ultimately before praise finally takes place. Imprecation as a statement of a resentment is also seen in the cursing and shaming of Psalm 109:28-29, which as Brueggemann (1984:51-55) suggests, remains unsatisfied until God has worked retaliation on those who have done wrong. It is the final plea before a change in tactics to an attitude of praise which can be seen in Psalm 109:30 and can be recognised briefly in Lam. 3:21-2; 39-40.

6.5.4 The *geber*'s Battle Plan

The *geber*'s battle plan requires many manoeuvres because it is not simply a logical equation of right question and right answer, as the linear threads of Deed and Consequence would suggest:

Yhwh + people = +/- prosperity	(Deuteronomic thread)
Yhwh + king + priest = +/- protection	(Davidic thread)
Yhwh + wise sayings + action = +/- the good life	(Wisdom thread)
Yhwh + confession + trust = +/- restoration	(Prophetic thread)

Yhwh seems to be absent from the equation. History is being re-shaped as the king is in exile and most of the priests, elders and prophets have gone, or are lying wounded

or dead in the street. Therefore, it is not surprising that the *geber*'s lament takes on a different form. The suffering warrior still needs more time and space to work out a strategy for recovery. In contradistinction to the *'almānāh* and the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, however, the *geber* actually voices his expectation of a change and makes strong resolves by drawing on well-known wisdom sayings (Lam. 3:25-27). Through 'recursions[190] and continuities', of repeated shots and battle words he returns over and over again to grief and disorientation. He continues to motivate God to act or speak by using cries, words and imagery to the final strophe of the Lamentation, as he seems to be almost bribing God to hear his cry.

So what does the *geber*'s battle plan look like? The suffering *geber* and his community use the lament structure and the plea of the components Address-Lament-Trust-Ask-Revenge as a tactic for dealing with the enemy (and God). In the absence of *yhwh* he sets out to justify himself by claiming through his tripartite name *'ādām ḥāy geber* to be an authority on the experience of affliction through the self-presentation of 'I … me … me' of 'I (*'ănî*) am the one who has suffered (*'ŏnî*)'. His personal claim is in juxtaposition to the lament for the dead, which is addressed to the dead person and not to God, as in the lament addressed to Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:17-27) in the words, 'Saul and Jonathan … beloved and cherished … swifter than eagles … stronger than lions'. Ohler (1985) suggests that the reason for this is that 'according to the ideas of Israel a [person] departs out of the sphere of the living, therefore one cannot bring to God one's sorrow about the dead person'. The *geber*'s form of *Begründung* is also in stark contrast to the overt address to God (*'ĕlōhîm*) in the opening line of the Lament Psalm 79, where the psalmist pleads: 'O God, heathens have entered your domain'.

Speaking about Lamentations, the next part of the *geber*'s exploration, the 'Lament', according to Westermann (1981:64), traditionally involves three persons (subjects) namely *yhwh*, the foes and 'I' or 'we', as demonstrated in the analysis in 6.5.2. In Lamentations 3:2-17 the first person, 'I' refers to the *geber*, but the third person, 'he'

[190] For more specific examples of recursion in patterns that occur over and over again see the working of acrostic and grief frameworks (2:7), the *Leitwort-stil* of *'êkāh* (3:1) and the reversion of *bənê ṣiyyôn baṯ-'ammî* (7:3). The cry in anger and shame, which becomes a repetitive experience for *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* also becomes common to human kind. Spence (1987:188) suggests, just as the beating of the heart and the motion of the planets bring 'a certain kind of lawfulness and expectancy', so the recursive structure lies at the heart of much of our experience of 'real life'.

remains nameless, invisible and distant at this stage of the investigation, so 'he' could be alluding to God and/or the foes. In his adverse circumstance the sufferer admits that he needs reinforcements. As the lamenter remembers past battles and names the source of 'trust', so the *geber* names *yhwh* in Lam. 3:18-27 and the psalmist (Ps. 79:13 see above) confides:

> Then we, Your people,
> the flock You shepherd'.

The *geber*'s challenge is that his present suffering and disaster denies the nature of a compassionate and 'infinite' God. He has lost confidence in someone who was an ally, but has since become an enemy. He is, however, forced by the next component of his plan to 'ask' God to remember his affliction and goes on to remind God of his earlier acts of mercy (3:19-25). The psalmist in his lament (Ps. 79:8, 9, 12) also 'asks' God to 'hear … save … punish' in accordance with the agreement. Despite the process that has taken place so far in his questioning of *yhwh* as ally (or is he enemy?), the *geber* has not found the answers that he wants, so he moves to the next component and looks for 'Revenge'. He wants his enemies 'pursued in anger' and 'destroyed' by *yhwh* (Lam. 3:66). The *geber* has finished his inquisition, but he has not won the war. Expressed as the praise of God, as Westermann (1981:64) notes, victory follows 'only where the petition has been answered!' So for the Lamentations lyrics, which concentrate on the *Begründung* of lament, praise is missing, because the request has not yet been granted. There is a curious need to stay with the complaint of grief, but at the same time there is an appeal to *yhwh*, which forms part of the process of recovery, but in itself is not an acceptance, a re-orientation, a refiguration, or a cause for praise. By comparison, the psalmist asks for a double wish, a 'sevenfold payback' to neighbours who have abused *yhwh* (Ps. 79:12) before a harmonious relationship between God and his people can be restored and then, says the psalmist, 'we shall tell your praises' (79:13).

Brueggemann (1995:21-2, 56-7) says of the Lament Psalm 88: 'when every hope is abandoned' and there is 'the full recognition of collapse', there is determination and assurance to wait for *yhwh*'s response, because 'this prayer is the meeting ground where life occurs'. Reimer (2002:551) suggests that the attention in Lamentations 3 is

eventually diverted onto the proper object of *yhwh*'s punishment: the enemies themselves (3:59-63). He says:

> This hope brings together God and the people against their common enemies, as God's hostile activity is no longer targeted against his own people (3:1-18) but against the enemies of his people (3:58-66); he is no longer enemy but ally.

Nevertheless the *geber* is not yet rehabilitated; the fight continues; he is still appealing and waiting for a response.

What the *geber* really wants is to restore the broken engagement, so he uses frameworks, vocabulary and imagery of his time in order to re-construct his life and environment. He uses building terminology (3:5, 7, 9, 16, 53) ironically to depict the city as a place of captivity, punishment, death and hunger. If the Lamentations lyrics represent the experience of the Babylonian invasion and the exile, then the stones from the collapsed buildings could act as a memorial, thus becoming a sign-act for a future generation?[191] They could form an altar of lament as a sacramental part of their worship and a perpetual remembrance of the power of God in their liturgy. The question posed is whether there is any hope of rebuilding a city from the stones and whether out of the rubble of the temple and sanctuary, a new relationship with *yhwh* could be developed. The question still remains as to whether the stones, like the acrostic, become a boundary, which if it is inhibiting, must be overcome. The *geber* is challenging the aspects of the popular belief system that God will automatically fight on behalf of his people.

6.6 Conclusion

The *geber* negotiates for a better life for himself and for his people groups through the configuration process of *Begründung*. He uses well-known traditions of lament to plead for justice, for time, for reduction in suffering and even acceptance by God. His exploration and questioning continues to the end. He is still searching for a way of re-engagement. In his dilemma he makes his lamentation universally accessible by identifying with his fellow human beings and all creation. He commiserates with

[191] Ancient Egyptians built pyramids to care for their dead, so that they could carry on their duties in the after-life. They had religious significance as well as memorial importance. A more recent example of such stone memorials is that of the Lockerbie Memorial Cairn.

fellow-sufferers, who are restricted, but still battling for a hearing and looking for recovery from the emotion resulting from the trauma of loss, injury or rejection. He does not reach refiguration stage, so needs to continue to configure his grief. Moreover, there are situations where the sufferer is unable to bargain or fight back as the warrior *geb̲er* has done, such as the oppressive situation of *bənê ṣiyyôn* and *baṯ-ʻammî* in Lamentations 4.

7. *Bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-ʿammî*: Wilderness Conditions in Lamentations

> The day of his death was a dark cold day.
> Far from his illness
> The wolves ran on through the evergreen forests. W.H. Auden

7.1 Introduction

So far in Part III of this thesis I have been demonstrating the important part that *metaphora* plays in Lamentations. By naming the unnamed on the 'Textual Strand' the silences of suffering are highlighted on the 'Psychological Strand'. This transfer of word-imagery is a kind of *epiphora*,[192] i.e. a carrying over from one image to another, so that the colourful imagery of the text throws light on a simple understanding of grief. The experience of grief also colours the way the text is read. Metaphor is particularly effective in achieving this synthesis of likes and un-likes. In Lamentations 4, a cluster of metaphors extends the opening stanzas, bringing an intensity of colour which rapidly fades to a dull spectrum spanning the city (Lam. 4:1-3). The images of precious stones spilled in a street full of rubble and 'throw-away' earthen pitchers in the dust give rise to the thought of the oppressed and depressed conditions in which the duo, named 'Children of Zion' (*bənê ṣiyyôn*) and 'My poor people' (*baṯ-ʿammî*), find themselves. The change in animal imagery from the strength and destructiveness of lions and bears to the wilderness symbolism of jackals and ostriches, is a further confirmation that conditions are severe in a fight between life and death. However, somewhat surprisingly, they are also portrayed as examples of protection and survival. This raises the question of where is *yhwh*, what is he doing? Why does he not protect his people?

Perhaps at first glance the images are shocking and repelling, both textually and psychologically. Nevertheless, they bring a strange twist to a setting where people reduced in vitality are sinking into dejection. Looting is rife, dead bodies lie in the street and the stronger are preying on the weaker. Political and religious tensions abound as the people wail over the destruction of their city. Invaders have smashed the walls and broken the gates of the city and come in to kill, destroy and take people captive. The people are mourning the loss and protection of their king, priests,

[192] According to Soskice (1985:2-3) it is a transfer of a word from an original to a secondary application. Soskice cites Herbert Read's (1928:25) suggestion that 'it is the expression of a complex idea, not by analysis, nor by abstract statement, but by a sudden perception of an objective relation'.

prophets and elders, who have either been killed or carried off into exile. Above all they are lamenting the neglect of *yhwh* and the loss of their accustomed life-style. The people have lost their homes, their temple and their city. Those who have survived wander around aimlessly, rummaging for food in the wreckage. Thus the poet depicts images of displaced people, who have lost everything they value and everybody they love, which seems to me to reflect a psychological phase of grief when feelings of depression set in (Kübler-Ross 1989:77).

As explained in 2.7 and shown on the helix (Figure 13), the acrostic framework sets up tension between the safe environment of expected outcomes drawn from traditional

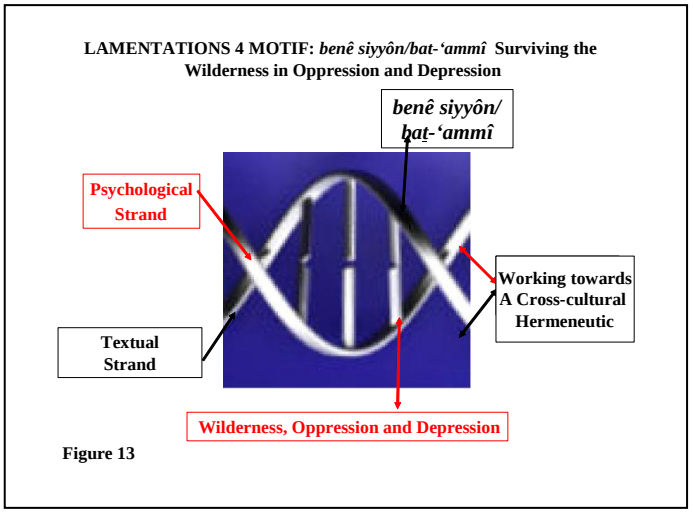


Figure 13

poetic devices of lament and surprising reversal of experiences revealed through its overflow of emotional boundaries. In Lamentations 4 the poet emphasises the doubly-intense and wide-ranging experience of depression and oppression of the people and the land. This comes not only from a literary convention of acrostic, which takes the reader through the A-Z of lament yet again, but also through the all-inclusiveness of a visual spectrum of contrasting colours hinted at earlier in 2.7. This alternative panorama presents a confusion of values and a crisis of identity through an array of vivid colours, which very soon appear pale, dull and lifeless, as energy is drained from the situation. The colours, in turn present 'a thought in a sensible or tangible form', suggesting that tropes do not just transmit ideas and thoughts:

> they depict them in a more or less lively fashion, they clothe them in richer or duller colours; like so many mirrors, they reflect different faces of objects and show them off in their most advantageous light … setting them into relief … whose nature we long to know, as this nature presents itself with entrancing novelty (Ricoeur 2003:69 citing Fontanier 1968:74).

The visual impact of the poetic devices through the A-Z border of the acrostic and the arc of the spectrum results in new insights. The colourful imagery introduced through poetic devices, 'purges the feelings of pity and fear'. Furthermore, in Ricoeur's words (2003:12-13) 'its project is mimetic' and its aim is to 'compose an essential representation of human actions'. The effect is to release areas of grief that have been shut-down in the present suffering, so that time and space not only resurrect vivid memories from the past, but also open up different ranges of possibilities. In the darkness of depression and the monochrome nature of despair, people are searching for a known frame of reference. This process (configuration) allows a comforting way back to a known frame of reference (prefiguration) which could be a literary device, a psychological stage, or a conceptual model such as a helix. This provides coping strategies in physical and emotional chaos and possibly a new way ahead (new figuration).

In addition to the familiar acrostic form and its spectrum of colours, the fourth lyric opens like Lamentations 1 and 2 with a death wail (*'êkāh*), but this time it is a double cry of grief (*'êkāh … 'êkāh* Lam. 4:1, 2). As the cry is uttered the 'precious children of Zion' (*bənê ṣiyyôn*) and 'my poor people' (*baṯ-'ammî*) are named and introduced as a double metaphor. In the first three stanzas, the poet uses 'earthy' imagery of minerals and animals, which may be expected in the fall of the city, but also uncovers some surprising links of the *bənê ṣiyyôn* and *baṯ-'ammî* to stones, jackals and ostriches. The destruction of the city walls and gates, temple and sanctuary has been lamented in previous lyrics, but now, more specifically, grief is expressed over the loss of meaning as the stones (*'eḇen*) of the buildings tumble into the street, as if they have no value. Likewise, the golden vessels have become like everyday earthen pitchers: utilitarian, throw-away objects of little value. For the *bənê ṣiyyôn*, the 'gold standard' of both the inner sanctuary of the vessels, décor of the temple and the internal social and economic environment has slipped and lost its currency. At the same time the value of precious stones has dropped (Lam. 4:1-2). Devaluation is the

order of the day as past treasures are debased, values are at rock bottom, established structures have been flattened and people feel threatened as they are deemed to be utilitarian or 'throw-away' commodities like everyday earthen pots. Scattered stones and earthen pots thus become a symbol of depression and oppression in the conflict of stability and broken-ness, value and worthlessness. In a context of human exposure and dire need, the poet's empathy is drawn to the protection and survival techniques of the jackal and the ostrich as a curious reminder to people that there is hope for survival, even in a violent scene where there is chaos, plundering and looting.

7.2 Spectrum: Vivid Colours or Dull and Monochrome?

The poet continues with the acrostic framework, but in Lamentations 4 a spectrum of colour is added. However, a shadow is thrown over the reflected light on this landscape of economic, social and spiritual depression. Lamentations 4 portrays the curse of human degradation, through famine (Lam. 4:3-5, 8-10) and thirst (4:4, 8) because of the lack of variety of fruits or food to eat: a reversal of the blessing of creation. The rulers, priests, and those in positions of honour, once had healthy colour in their cheeks. Now, through starvation, their faces are pinched and scorched and their naked skeletal frames have only their own shrivelled skin to cover them. The rich purple garments of the bourgeoisie have become faded and soiled as their once-prestigious wearers forage for food in the rubbish (4:5). They are no longer recognised, nor do they stand out from the crowd due to their bejewelled and brightly coloured garments (4:7-8). Like the others they attempt to survive among the refuse heaps. Once again there is a sense of grief being a leveller, as all are scantily clad in mourning garments. Grievous famine, enforced fasting and starvation overshadow posterity as infants die of thirst (4:3-5) and as mothers are unable to breast-feed. Even worse, in such extremity, children are being cooked as food for their parents (4:8-10) and parents in their weakness are unable to care for their children or act as food providers. Lamentation is still required and expression of grief has no let up.

The streets are arrayed with the rubble and the charred remains of buildings blackened by fire (4:11). The surrounding walls have been conquered and broken down, allowing enemy inroads into family dwellings and sacred buildings (4:12). Just as there are now openings in the walls of the city, which weaken the barriers between the people in the city and the world around them, so the wounds of war (4:12), death,

disease and pollution (4:13-15) have claimed their toll, revealing a fine boundary between living and dying. Fragmentation and fragility somehow draw attention to the value of life. Physically through injury, there are openings in the protective areas of the body so that damaged limbs, red with wounds (4:7) and injured bodies, black and blue with bruises (4:7-8) can become infected. At the same time, such wounds can become a channel through which others are affected, as they respond to the vulnerability of a fellow creature in pain. Campbell (1986:40) points out this twist in events:

> blood and wounds have important positive effects in creating a sense of community. The opening in the body is a channel of communication from one isolated individual to another; the hazardous overflowing of blood an ultimate risking of the self for others. These communal aspects are evident both in the ritual sacrifices of the Jewish temple cult and in the Christian Eucharist: blood becomes the seal of reconciliation. Death is the final proof of our humanity.

In the mix of death and life, in the conflict of killing and keeping alive, people's faces have become black, charred with the heat and their emaciated skin has become wizened, like dry wood which no longer has life in it (4:8). God's anger is still active towards the people (4:16-17) and at the same time enemy tactics are bent on destruction (4:18-20). The incongruity and reversal of values, the darkness of death, the bleakness of the abandonment by God and rejection by fellow human beings may be encapsulated by: 'Our doom is near, our days are done – Alas our doom has come!' (4:18). These feelings are captured intertextually in the personal lament of the psalmist (Ps. 88): 'I am at the brink of Sheol' and in Job's cry: 'I am sick of life' (Job 9:21). The impressionistic speech of complaint and lament correlates with the fugitives (Lam. 4:15), as they are pursued like prey in a situation of displacement (4:18-19). In Ugaritic literature when *Baal* receives the command to descend to the netherworld, he acquiesces to the command and 'journeys to the edge of the earth, and there in the parched desert of death meets his fate' (Anderson 1991:60). Everything seems helpless and hopeless: a situation unable to be recovered (4:21-22) for a weak and suffering people, who in the disaster of 6th century BCE had become political misfits and seemingly dispensable by *yhwh* and of little value to anyone.

The tension between the yearning for organised structure and the need to express chaotic thoughts and turbulent emotions happens throughout Lamentations 4. There is dismay at the loss of dignity and evidence of a return to primal chaos and a realisation that the façade of convention must be relinquished.[193] Instead, betrayal and lack of security pervade the scene. The process of recapture must take a route through the pain of disappointment and depression. Even for the 'bourgeoisie', the oppression can no longer be covered by ideology, nor can the slippage be explained through the guise of economic prestige. There has to be a new social organisation, a relinquishing of the old and faded scene and a recapturing of new meaning to life.

7.3 Reversal and Rapprochement

In Lamentations 4 the poet is using the metaphorical vehicles of precious stones (*'abnê-qōdeš*), jackals (*tannîm*) and ostriches (*'ēnîm*), to act as a dynamic connection to the psychologically troubled experience of the *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṭ-'ammî*. In the first three stanzas, the tension between the poetic form and its turbulent content is noticeable: a schema, which represented on the helix, becomes what I am calling a situation of 'reversal and rapprochement'. Through the versatility of metaphor, the rivalry between the reversal of circumstances and the rapprochement of experience become interpretative possibilities. 'Reversal',[194] in this sense is not only an action of going backwards in time or space, but in Lamentations it is also the expression of isolation and depression, when circumstances are disastrously upside down, back to front and contrary to expectation. It is where the traditions and ordered nature of towns, villages, families and relationships have been shaken and turned upside down, so that things are contrary to how they used to be.

[193] Brueggemann (1995:18) cites Ricoeur's argument that 'two hermeneutics are both essential and must be seen in the dialectic of displacement and recapture'. Ricoeur (1970:423-24) explains that 'this alternation of relinquishing (*déprise*) and recapture (*reprise*) is the philosophical basis of the entire metapsychology'.

[194] See Kübler-Ross (1989), Parkes (1972), Bowlby (1961), Archer (1999:42), Brueggemann (1977:269, 1995: xiv), Joyce (1993:309) and Reimer (2002:552). Jahnow (1923:36) quoted by Albrektson (1963:218) makes the point that 'the Scheme of Reversal' is seen as a dominant element, in connection with Jahnow's work on funeral laments. See also 5.3 on recursion and the freedom of backward and forward movement on the helix.

Rapprochement[195] means the 'bringing together' of things, the gathering of people, the collation of texts, a reconciliation of two people and the 'comparison of ideas', which becomes a coping strategy in the disturbance of scattering, rift and reversal. The question of whether the bringing together produces a way ahead out of grief and lament will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter. The so-called 'precious children of Zion' (*bənê ṣiyyôn*) once valued as gold, have turned cruel and are likened to ostriches of the desert. They have been renamed 'my poor people' (*baṯ-ʿammî*) in a setting where 'metaphor re-describes reality' (Ricoeur 2003:24) and where there is constant tension between 'generativity vs. stagnation' and 'integrity vs. despair' (Erikson 1994:94).

The social foundations of community were once held secure by the symbolic city gates and bonded together by religious values. They were once protected by the solid pillars and structures of the temple, but are now scattered and trodden under foot like loose stones in the street. In these extreme conditions the two-in-one idea of reversal and rapprochement invites psychological flashbacks to the good times, before the gold became tarnished (*yûʿam*)[196] and the sacred stones or gems were thrown onto the street. In those times, before jackals and ostriches appeared on the barren scene and people became cruel, things were safe. Coping strategies are thus configured in order to live through violence and injustice.[197] Perhaps also there are vague hopes for an ideal future where there is no more hurt or destruction and where animals and people live peaceably together (cf. Isa. 11:6).

The rapprochement of the reader to the text is through the configuration of human responses in situations of suffering and disaster, as demonstrated already in earlier chapters and which continues to take place in this chapter. This recognition involves a movement from ignorance to knowledge through explanation and understanding. It is a change, which affects the good or bad that happens to the person(s) involved.

[195] The concept of 'rapprochement' becomes both a literary and a psychological method of figuration or *mimesis* by which there is a bringing together of the text's form and content through reconciliation and reunion of people, expressing reversal and handling grief.
[196] The Hebrew verb *yûʿam* is from *ʾamam* to grow dark, black or to overshadow, whilst the Aramaic means to cover, veil or conceal. Albrektson (1963:172) explains that the Greek rendering is 'will become dark or dim', but the word used in the Syriac version is less precise meaning 'rejected, thrown away'.
[197] Gottwald (1954:50) sees this as a 'tension between history and faith' where a different faith and a different theological tradition start to emerge.

Recognition is associated particularly with relationships, as Heath (1996: xxxi) explains, 'because things are not what they seemed, what a person has done or is about to do is not what [s]he thought it was'. Heath continues (1996: xxxiii) 'the tragic effect is thus enhanced when people inflict harm on those "closely connected with them"'. If in this complete reversal from the expected obligation to 'help your friends and harm your enemies' the injury is inflicted knowingly, then feelings of disgust and revulsion occur. If, on the other hand, someone unwittingly harms a person close to them, the pity and fear of tragedy emerge towards both the agent and the victim (1996: xxxiv). However, in the process of reversal and rapprochement there are constant reminders of how things were and lament over how things are.

7.4 Flashbacks: Temple Stones

The poet, in the guise of *bənê ṣiyyôn* in the opening cameo of Lamentations 4, eulogises the gold, gems and stones of past memories of Jerusalem and quickly replaces them with a picture of the strewn stones in the street of a destroyed city (cf. Figure 14 for a contemporary example). The Hebrew for sacred gems or 'stones of

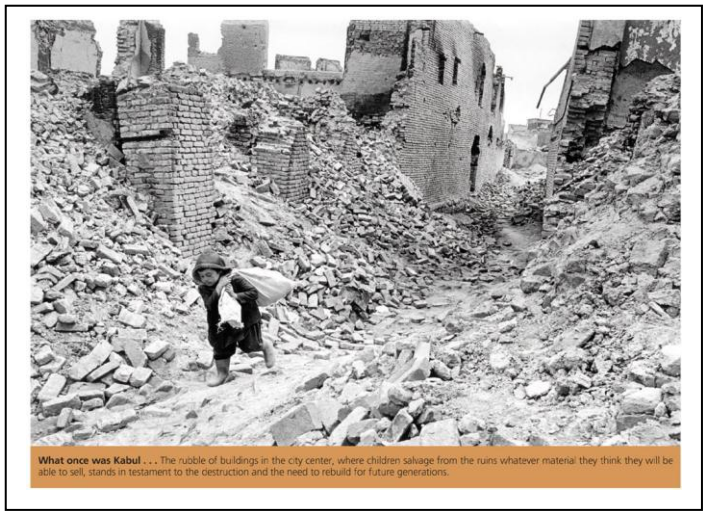


Figure 14 Stones strewn in the street[198]

the sanctuary' is *'abnê-qōdeš*. The root of *'abnê* is *'eben* and is the word used for ordinary stones, but it also refers to the costly stones of the temple building and to the

[198] This picture could almost be the strewn stones of Jerusalem and its *bənê ṣiyyôn / baṯ-'ammî.* It is of 'what was once Kabul … the rubble of buildings in the city centre, where children salvage from ruins whatever material they think they will be able to sell, stands in testament to the destruction and the need to build for future generations'.

precious stones set in the high priest's garments, namely the ephod and the Breast-plate. Dealing with the sacred temple stones first: the temple had been built on a foundation of huge blocks of stone, which had been quarried and hewn under King Solomon's direction and through people's taxation (1 Kgs. 5:31 TAN, 5:17 KJV). Middlemas (2005:145) suggests that scholars such as Gunkel and Ferris have proposed that the Lamentations texts have their *Sitz im Leben* in communal fasts, called to commemorate the events that took place around the collapse of Jerusalem in 597 BCE. The Temple in Jerusalem, as the Ark of the Covenant before it, had been a central gathering point for the people,[199] a symbol of political and religious unity and a place where the Hebrew God (*yhwh*) was worshipped. The temple had a dual purpose: it was a sacred building made of blocks of stone, but it also served as a state treasury to house gold, silver and precious stones.

The poet is using vivid imagery, which calls to mind *bənê ṣiyyôn*'s ideal past. The memories of Zion as a fortified city and a successful centre in the aNE are juxtaposed with the oppression in the Babylonian crisis of the 6th century BCE. The engagement of their God (*yhwh*) with his people seems to have broken down and like the temple building, lay in fragments. In other words, instead of a close relationship and identification with his people, *yhwh/'ādōnāy*, the God of life and power, 'will look on them no more' (Lam. 4:16). In this lament the poet is bringing to the foreground fundamental issues. Sacred places have been desecrated, the power and protection of *yhwh* is absent and the community network has broken down: a situation that could be typical of the social oppression and psychological depression that are often recognisable in disaster situations in the world today. Backer et al. (1982:22) in their work on psychological grief, note that when there is a realisation of the proximity of death: 'rage turns to feelings of depression and loss … loss of goals, family and ultimately oneself' (1982:25). It is at this point, when those sitting with the depressed find that they empathise with the overwhelming feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. The poet uses imagery to focus the reader on the extreme experiences of the *bənê ṣiyyôn/bat-'ammî*, in their deprivation of the essential provisions of food, drink and shelter.

[199] The gathering point for the people in the Sinai Desert was the Ark of the Covenant with the cloud. As they started out Moses was to say, 'Advance O Lord! May your enemies be scattered' (Num. 10:35).

In the setting of the Hebrew Bible, the Almighty God who offered Abraham posterity has 'vented all his fury' (Lam. 4:11) on the people, leaving them suffering and exposed. Ringgren (1981:22) points out that in both the Hebrew Bible and in the Sumero-Babylonian religion, gods were often metaphorically called 'mountain' or 'rock', as symbols of their power, strength and immovability. However, do these metaphors become what Davidson (1979:41) calls 'a patent falsehood or an absurd truth' where relationships have broken down and 'God the Rock of protection' (cf. Pss. 28:1, 18:3) has become stonily cruel? Can there be any form of reconciliation, rapprochement or empathy in such hostile circumstances of reversal?

The poet is using well-known images of the aNE, which I am suggesting serve as concrete examples of how the conceptual idea of reversal and rapprochement works in the fluctuating emotions at a time of disaster and suffering in a city. In our contemporary world stone buildings and boundaries are still tangible reminders, whether they represent temples or cairns, cities or grave stones, they become metaphorical markers of an important time, a special place, or a sacred experience. Examples are also seen cross-culturally in the Hebrew Bible in the constant rivalry for political power and religious dominance between the Hebrew God *yhwh* and gods of other nations. The Philistine people, for example, had their Temple, with the statue of the god Dagon,[200] whom they worshipped. In a time of crisis Dagon was also broken in pieces. The Tower of Babel was built as a corporate unifying project in ancient Babylon,[201] but conversely it became a point from which people were scattered and disunited through confusion of language. Lamentations 4 is uttered at a time of huge religious crisis and political conflict, where boundaries had shifted and political and religious frameworks were fragmented.

The Mesopotamian Boundary Stone was used to mark agreed boundaries of peoples and land, such as the pact between the two nations set up by Laban and Jacob (Gen. 31:49).[202] The 'stone of help' (1 Sam. 7:12) set up by Samuel between Mizpah and Shen was to defend territory from invasion by the Philistines. The stone tablets

[200] Heb. *Bēt-dâgon* 1Sam. 5:5; Judg. 16:23. See Pritchard (1955:139).
[201] Heb. *bābel* 'gate of God', the ancient Babylonian city was built by Marduk according to Babylonian tradition. It was a political and religious centre, which had a tall tower (Gen. 11:1-11).
[202] The stone pillar that Jacob set up and the heap of stones gathered became a witness to a pact not only between two people, but between two nations. Both the Aramaic name *yegar-sahadutha* and the Hebrew name *gal'êd* mean mound (or stone heap) of witness. See also Whybray (2001:58).

inscribed with the Ten Commandments (Ex. 24:12) represented Israel's engagement with *yhwh*. The setting up of the twelve stones in the River Jordan became a symbolic act of worship, not only at that specific time, but also in generations to come (Josh. 4:3). So the poet in Lamentations 4 uses the mimetic[203] dynamics of stones spilled at every street corner to recognise similarities and to transfer the name of one thing to another. The Hebrew word *'eben* is thus fluid in its interpretation and refers not only to temple stones, defence lines and boundaries, but also to stones engraved with important agreements. However, there is a further aspect relating to precious gems from the priest's clothing or symbolically the people of the city (*bənê ṣiyyôn/baṭ-'ammî*).

7.5 Sacred Gems

The High Priest of the Hebrew Bible wore special garments, the ephod and the breastplate, which carried precious stones (*'eben*). These garments were important because they had stones (*'eben*), which were engraved with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, so that the priest represented the people before God (Ex. 39:10-13). When priests were killed (Lam. 1:19, 2:20) and disregarded (4:16) and precious stones were scattered in the street, it was symbolic of the abandonment and dispersal of the people of Israel. The people were no longer valued by God or by others in what Lanaham (1974:47) calls 'the total collapse of the state as a nation, as a people and as a culture'. The poet could be using the metaphor of 'stones spilled in the street' as a cathartic process for the abused *bənê ṣiyyôn /baṭ-'ammî*. The ephod worn on the shoulders of the priest is described as a colourful article of clothing, made of gold, blue, purple and crimson yarns and set with two lapis lazuli or onyx stones. These two stones, sometimes called 'an object of lights', or Urim, and 'an object of perfection' or Thummim, are significant in that each one was engraved with the names of six of the twelve tribes of Israel (Ex. 28:30).

Symbolically, the high priest wearing his garments with engraved stones (Figures 15 and 16, p.181) would bring the people before God as he came into the sanctuary to offer sacrifice. Lindblom (1962:179) posits that perhaps originally only the first

[203] Ricoeur (1984:32-3) describes mimesis as an active process of imitating or representing something: a dynamic sense of transposition into representative works. I also use the word 'rapprochement' for this process. See sections 1.4.1 and 4.2.

(*aleph*) and last (*tav*) letters of the Hebrew alphabet, were inscribed on the stones, and these were later interpreted as abbreviations, since Urim (אורים) begins with the letter א and Thummim (תמים) begins with the letter ת. Therefore, just as the acrostic acted as a literary boundary from which *bənê ṣiyyôn* expressed their lament and explored their grief, so the stones represented *baṯ-'ammî*'s sacred foundation of religious traditions in their relationship with *yhwh* and their enjoyment of the mineral riches of the land. However, these memories served only to reinforce the terrible reversal in the experience of the depths of depravity and loss in Lamentations 4.

Figure 15
High Priest with Breast Plate

Figure 16
Breast Plate with Precious Stones

Therefore, the poet uses the spectrum of colourful and precious stones as a contrast to the present depression, where the lack-lustre priests are now unable to lead the people and no longer stand before God to offer purification sacrifices for the people. Albrektson (1963:187) observes 'the emphasis is still on the scheme of reversal'. Albrektson continues to explain that the priests who had shed the blood of the righteous are now themselves blood-stained victims; those who had been anxious to keep all the cultic rules of purity cannot avoid contact with unclean things. The

religious boundaries of cultic holiness (Ex. 19:12), of food rites (Gen. 3:3; Lev. 7:21), of body health and purity (Lev. 13:45) have disappeared.

The High Priest's Breastplate made of gold, blue, purple and crimson yarns and set with twelve stones: carnelian, chrysolite, emerald, turquoise, sapphire, amethyst, jacinth, agate, crystal row, beryl, lapis lazuli and jasper (Ex. 39:10-13) has become a faded spectrum in the worldview of the *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî*. The *bənê ṣiyyôn* and the *baṯ-'ammî* and readers of Lamentations 4, who find themselves in situations of disaster and grief, are drawn to the unveiling of a different perspective. Poetic images provide links to the past, bringing relief from the depressing and oppressive present world-view, whilst inspiring a vague thread of hope. I am suggesting that the poet purposefully uses the colourful imagery of stones, which is also reflected intertextually in the apocalyptic literature set in the turbulent times of another fall of Jerusalem in the book of Revelation. Baukham (2001:1287), in his introduction to Revelation, points out the author's use of symbolic visions and more or less fantastic imagery to fund alternative perceptions of the world, its history and future. In the setting of the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, as in the situation of the fall of Jerusalem in 597 BCE, there is concern over the contradiction between God's rule over his creation and the apparently unchecked dominance of evil.

The brightly coloured, gem-filled garments of the priest, which brought the people by name to *yhwh,* also reflected a guiding response of *yhwh*'s purpose for his people. However, the form of relationship of priest to *yhwh* and to the people had become irregular, as *yhwh* had rejected the office of the priest (Lam. 2:6; 4:16). The remaining priests uttered sighs (1:4), some perished in the city (1:19) and still others were slain in the sanctuary (2:20). Priests have been rejected as 'untouchable' and prophets, no longer having spiritual insight, are being accused of shedding the blood of innocent people. Stones heaped like rubble reflect both aimlessness and disorder and apathy and destruction.

7.6 Wilderness Imagery

The *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî* left in Jerusalem were living in these hostile conditions. Perhaps it is not surprising that the poet selects the Hebrew symbol of stones, but the

imagery of the jackal [204] and the ostrich raises many other facets relating to death and survival. In contradistinction to *bənê ṣiyyôn/bat-ʿammî*, who are struggling, these animals can survive in stony, wilderness conditions, which the previously safe urban space of Jerusalem had now 'become'.[205] However, later on but still in the context of the Babylonian exile there is a similar cameo, but at that point they become a vehicle of prophetic restoration:

> The wild beast shall honour Me,
> Jackals and ostriches,
> For I provide water in the wilderness,
> Rivers in the desert, (Isa. 43:20)

However, in Lamentations the poet portrays stones, jackals and ostriches as the reverse of how things should be, since there is no promise of provision by *yhwh* or hope of recovery for his people. Job expresses his lament in similar language and imagery as he cries out to *yhwh*, but has no answer. Instead he feels kinship with these creatures of the wilderness:

> I have become a brother to jackals,
> A companion to ostriches. (Job 30:18-29)

Perhaps it is because ostriches live and lay their eggs in exposed and desert conditions. Jackals likewise live happily in the wilderness in holes or hiding places in cavities in the rocks. They hunt at night preying on the dead or wounded and the young and vulnerable. There are also strong links with Egypt and the magical power of *tannîm*. In the presence of the Pharaoh in Egypt, both Israel's leader Aaron and the opposing Egyptian magicians produce *tannîm*, translated as 'serpents', from their magical rods. In Jeremiah's oracle of the opposing fates of Babylon and Israel, the prophecy over Babylon is that it shall become rubble and a den for *tannîm*, in this case jackals. Therefore, the imagery of jackals (*tannîm*) in the Hebrew Bible suggests

[204] See also the haunts of jackals and other wild animals in Isa. 13:21-22, 14:23, 32:14, 34:11, 13-15, Jer. 10:22.
[205] Stones, jackals and ostriches are what Watson (2005:264) classifies as 'referential metaphors' i.e. based on what the poet can actually see, rather than 'conceptual metaphors'.

creatures that have mythical[206] overtones and they are variously translated and interpreted as such.

7.7 Jackals

The poet's use of the *tannîm* imagery in Lamentations 4, in the arid and violent setting in the aftermath of war, is translated and interpreted according to the era, setting and language of the version of the Biblical text. So for instance, the translation as 'sea monsters' in Lamentations (Lam. 4:3 KJV) and in the creation story (Gen. 1:21) implies that *tannîm* are mammals and as such offer the breast. Peter Martyr's 16th century rendering (in Shute 2002:154) is: 'dragons [who] draw forth breasts and nurse their whelps'. The créole version of Haiti in its Caribbean setting simply translates *tannîm* as 'mother cat'. I am using what I believe to be the most appropriate translation 'jackals', from the TAN, NRSV and NIV versions.[207] Cross-culturally, this creature *tannîm* can be depicted as tearing its prey like the aNE Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the so-called 'dragon' (Jer. 51:34), or as a professional assassin, as in the film 'The Day of the Jackal'. Through metaphorical contrast, the jackal as a predator is linked with blood, death and violence, but also with protection of life through the rearing and defence of its young. The jackal in the Lamentation text thus becomes a mythical symbol of survival in a situation of death and violence.

There may have been some influence from Egyptian mythology, where the image of the jackal-headed god, called *Anubis* was painted on the coffins of the dead. The jackal-headed god was not only the god of the dying and the funeral cult, but also a guardian of the dead, a 'go-between' who took souls into the underworld and protected them on their journey. The jackal image was well-known in the aNE and the poet uses this setting of death, opportunist looting and fear of the night prowler, to introduce the jackal metaphor. The poet juxtaposes jackals, with *bat-'ammî*. Jackals, as predators, still protect and suckle their young, but their strong jaws tear apart their prey. *Bat-'ammî* however, having been prey to predator-invaders have turned predator, and prey on their children. Is the poet, therefore, through metaphor,

[206] Mythical in the literary sense that Grelot (2006:21) suggests: 'words are used simply to describe cases where the language of the Bible has had to construct imagery that evokes two domains that are radically inaccessible to human experience, or at least to clear definitions of the realities they contain'.
[207] Alternatively translated as 'wild dogs' in the New International Readers Version and the New Century Version.

focusing on the unthinkable situation that the jackal cares more for its offspring than the *baṯ-ʿammî* does for thirsty and hungry babies? By implication, has *yhwh* condoned this neglect? What about the preservation of posterity? Has a reversal taken place between jackals and *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-ʿammî*, as Arapovic (2008:170) suggests has happened to the people and dogs in war-stricken Croatia (1991)?

> and barking of angry dogs
> from deserted squares of osijek (*sic*)
> dogs that wonder if the roles are reversed
> now men have turned rabid.

The Egyptian jackal-headed god *Anubis* (Figure 17) offered protection to the dead on their journey and allayed the fears that people had of death and dying. Is the jackal

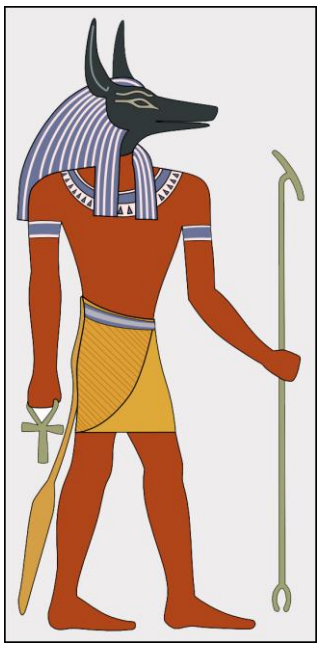


Figure 17
Egyptian Jackal-headed god
Anubis [208]

image, therefore, held up as an example of survival and protection during *yhwh*'s neglect of, and preying on, his people? However, the *baṯ-ʿammî* are without protection and have become cruel, in the arid conditions. They themselves are starving, so they cannot feed their young ones. Have they through their own experience of weakness and lack of care, lost hope, and in despair followed the

[208] The god of the dead and of embalming, Anubis guarded the mummy from evil forces in the night. Anubis also conducted the 'weighing of the heart' in the Hall of Judgement before Osiris and the 42 gods. Such vignettes were included in texts which were usually on papyrus and placed with the burial of those people sufficiently wealthy to afford a copy (Lurker 1980:28).

example of *'el šadday*, 'the strong breasted one' (Ps. 91:1) in his neglect to provide for his people?[209] Mammalians (*šad*) and 'the strong breasted one' (*'el šadday*) [210] offer posterity and protection through close bonds with the weak and vulnerable. Through such rapprochement there is blessing as they protect their young. Feeding them and including them in the community (Joel 2:16) is seen as part of the blessing of family growth and community prosperity in the Hebrew Bible. Conversely the prophet Hosea (9:14) proclaims as a curse, the inability to feed the young, in the declaration: 'give them a womb that miscarries, and shrivelled breasts'. Has *yhwh* as role-model been replaced by the imagery of the jackal?

For the people there is reversal of what should be in this terrible situation of starvation, where mothers eat their children instead of feeding their babies, where the future is being eaten up by the past. At the same time there is a curious form of rapprochement as both God and the *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî* have abandoned the future generation to thirst and starvation to death, so breaking the strong bond of creation and posterity. The poet uses the cameo of jackals, who despite the fact that they are violent scavengers, offer the breast (*šad*) to their young, giving them milk so that they will grow and be protected in the safety of a family setting. This is another example of reversal, where the poet laments the injuries, indignities and abuse even to babies and uses imagery as a way of engagement with the text. Campbell (1986:105) suggests that it is important to resist the desire for order and coherence, 'allowing the strangeness and newness' to demand our attention even though its 'untidiness' threatens our control of the situation, especially where the wild jackal seems to be more caring than the *baṯ-'ammî*. Stranger still the people are likened to ostriches.

7.8 Ostriches

> But my poor people (*baṯ-'ammî*) has turned cruel,
> Like ostriches (*'ēnîm*) of the desert. (Lam. 4:3a)

[209] See Isaiah. 49:15-16. The mother needs to nurse her child as much as the child needs to be nursed and the motherhood of God needs to provide and protect the people as much as they need that caring provision. See also Gruber (1983: 51-59).
[210] See Genesis 49:25-6 'The God of your father who helps you, and Shaddai who blesses you with blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that couches below, Blessings of the breast and womb'.

The Hebrew word *ʿēnîm*, translated as ostrich, probably comes from the sound of its cry, which some suggest is mournful.[211] The ostrich, another two-in-one metaphoric example of 'reversal and rapprochement', appears to be a stupid bird. It cannot fly, but can run, and seemingly does not care for its young. Nevertheless, it protects them from predators. It apparently feeds on pebbles and sand, but research shows that these are vital to its digestion of food. The ostrich symbolises reactions in situations of grief and depression, as in the extreme cases in Lamentations 4, where there is a reversal of what seems to be normal practice, thus causing distantiation instead of rapprochement. Such distantiation according to Erikson (1994:136) involves the readiness to repudiate, isolate, and, if necessary, destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to one's own. Campbell (1986:60) suggests that it is the way 'we use words to distance ourselves from experience - our own and other people's - and so to lose the simple sense of *nearness* - nearness of nature, of other people and of God'.

These are some reasons why the poet uses the simile 'like an ostrich' in juxtaposition with the *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-ʿammî.* To interpret the poetic meaning there needs to be some understanding of the aNE metaphorical use of the image of an ostrich. Job corroborates the view of the ostrich as careless, cruel and foolish:

> she leaves her eggs on the ground,
> Letting them warm in the dirt,
> Forgetting they may be crushed underfoot,
> Or trampled by a wild beast.
> Her young are cruelly abandoned as if they were not hers;
> Her labour is in vain for lack of concern.
> For God deprived her of wisdom,
> Gave her no share of understanding,
> Else she would soar on high,
> Scoffing at the horse and its rider. (Job 39:13)

The similarities appear because the *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-ʿammî* seem to be behaving in a cruel and foolish manner. In the same way that the ostrich exposes its eggs to predators and to heat and cold, so the *baṯ-ʿammî* neglects the children's needs.

[211] See Mic. 1:8b "I will lament as sadly as the jackals, as mournfully as the ostriches."

Similarly, as the ostrich uses its young for food, so mothers are eating their children. If the ostrich finds that a predator has discovered her eggs she will crush and sometimes eat the whole brood and start a nest elsewhere. The ostrich in wilderness surroundings seems to be cruel towards her young, like the *ba<u>t</u>-ʿammî* in an unsafe situation. In desperation, they both seem to survive at the expense of their young. This again is incongruous, so that people who have been protected and cared for by *yhwh* have turned cruel towards their own offspring.

7.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, experiences of reversal and rapprochement, as I have shown, are in tension on the 'Textual Strand' and on the 'Psychological Strand' through the strange metaphorical imagery of stones, jackals and ostriches. There are flashbacks, which Ricoeur (1984:80) calls 'the interlinkings that enable the memory of vast stretches of time … creating the effect of perspectival depth'. Thus the situation of puzzles and contradictions in the Lamentations text are mirrored intertextually and cross-culturally through metaphor. Gold is dulled, precious stones are scattered and people become cruel in the struggle for survival. The metaphorical schema sets up stark contrasts of order and disorder, which reflect feelings of conflict not only in Lamentations and the aNE, but also through time, to the suffering and disaster in the ruined cities and wilderness experiences of our world today. The poem ends with a suggestion that Zion has suffered enough and the next chapter will assess further steps in the route to rehabilitation and recovery.

8. *Ḥerpāṯēnû*: a Plea for Acceptance and Closure in Lamentations 5?

> And grief still feels like fear. Perhaps more strictly, like suspense. Or like waiting; just hanging about waiting for something to happen. C.S. Lewis

8.1 Introduction

Reader expectation may be that the fifth and last lyric of the Book of Lamentations will bring closure[212] to the framework of lament and simultaneously move out of grief into a new life style through the final stage of acceptance. Could this be the moment when the 'Textual Strand' and the 'Psychological Strand' are brought together so that there is recovery from suffering, restoration of relationships, as at last the emotions of grief are exhausted? Will there be a miraculous intervention so that things will be brought to a climax? Will harmony be magically restored through the processing of patterns, cries and imagery? This chapter proceeds to discuss whether the text is governed by closure or a sense of transcendence,[213] or whether there will be a finale, which brings in a *deus ex machina*. On the psychological front, is this situation terminal? Does it mark the cessation of a season of suffering for the community, so that there is finally a definitive route to recovery and reconciliation? Alternatively, is it just a case of inescapable fate, where the metaphorical people are silenced, made inactive through culture and tradition and so becoming emotionally stuck in grief?

Throughout this thesis the aim has been to engage with the Book of Lamentations from beginning to end. The acrostic frameworks from *aleph* to *tav* and the poetic repetition in Lamentations 1-5 and the corresponding grief stages act as coping strategies during a time of turbulence. Thus grief can be expressed and experienced in a more objective and contained environment. Emotional cries of grief have not only become culturally specific through translation, but they have also become resounding

[212] See sections 1.5.4 and 2.6 for further discussions on the alternative shape of the cyclone where Middlemas suggests that the peaceful eye of the third lyric brings cohesion. However, I am suggesting that the turbulence is still present in Lamentations 5. Assis (2005) in his concentric approach links Lamentations 1 with Lamentations 5, Lamentations 2 with Lamentations 4 and he also sees Lamentations 3 as the turning point where the change from despair to hope takes place. However, this thesis argues that the frameworks of lament and grief stay in place throughout the five lyrics to give order in chaos, but at the same time allow a backward and forward movement repeatedly through various complaint patterns and grief phases, to prevent an early, or forced silencing of lament, or a 'getting stuck' through an over-occupation with grief. The definitive or more permanent move from lament to praise, and grief to acceptance, does not take place until a later stage (cf. Isa. 40), so that lament is not glossed over and grief is not forgotten.

[213] See D.A. Miller (1981: xii-xiv) for a discussion on closure and transcendence.

outcries, which act as an overlay on both social and religious norms. The agility of metaphor has provided a multivalent aspect, so that the dynamic imagery of the ancient Lamentations lyrics has significance in the spectrum of human grief experience, spanning across time and culture. These tensions of form and content, sound and silence, metaphorical stillness and movement have been demonstrated intertextually and have become psychologically accessible through human experiences of grief even to our multi-cultural world today.

8.1.1 Lamentations Motifs and Variations

It has already been noted in previous chapters, that the acrostic form and its mimetic stages or phases of grief, change in pattern and intensity until in this the final lyric they become less dominant (see Figure 18). The format of 22 stanzas still remains in

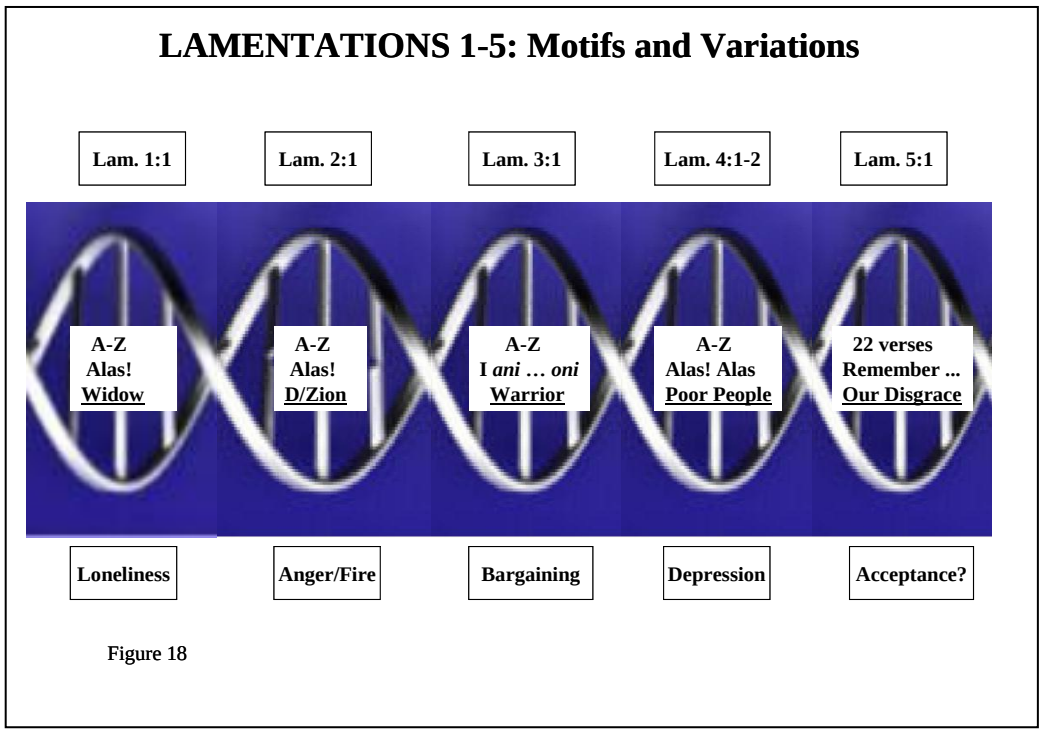


Figure 18

Lamentations 5 even though the tight boundaries of the 22 letters of the alphabet have disappeared. It is as if finally the imposed literary structure has been relaxed. This is perhaps an indication that there is less reliance on traditional formats. However, an acknowledgement that an external support system is still required in the culmination of lamentation and the movement towards the acceptance of a new worldview. This coping strategy on the 'Textual Strand' is paralleled on the 'Psychological Strand', so

that as the text draws to a close there is an expectation that the repetitive phases and stages of grief could also be coming to an end.

Cries of grief, which in Lamentations 1-4 have been more personal through the cries of *'êkāh* or through the self-orientated expression *'ănî ... 'ŏnî*, become other-directed and more confident in Lamentations 5. The community metaphorically referred to as 'our disgrace' *ḥerpāṯēnû*) addresses *yhwh* directly. It is as if the *'almānāh*, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, *geber* and *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-'ammî* join together in the solidarity of their disgrace in the thickening expression of a communal complaint. Their plea to *yhwh* is to 'remember' (Lam. 1:7, 9; 2:1; 3:19, 20; 5:1), to 'behold and see' (Lam. 1:11, 12; 2:20; 3:50, 63; 4:16; 5:1), as they look back at what has gone before, in order to focus on the contrasting situation of the present. There is a more widespread, but conscious involvement in the hope for recovery, as the third person reportage becomes direct speech and the individual 'I/me' becomes part of a community 'we/us'. It is as if the inclusive I/me and we/us starts to break down barriers in the new dialogue of humanity with humanity and humanity with deity.

8.2 Lamentations 5 and Metaphorical Community

Through repetition grief is piled upon grief from generation to generation and boundaries become blurred in the overflow of personal and social loss. Distancing has happened between individuals in community, between the people and their God and between national community and the world beyond. Hardy and Ford (1984:54)[214] suggest that 'groups of people have many possible means of identifying themselves and their boundaries' in religious and social expression, such as 'by blood, geographical area, dress, life-style, rules and laws, language and belief systems, and programme of action'. In Lamentations 1-4 we have already seen relationships by blood groups, through mothers, babies, children, daughters and sons. However, during the turbulence families have been split up, babies and children have died and

[214] Hardy and Ford posit that all of these groups play a part in the gathering for worship and carrier of identity. Within the requirement for commitment there is capacity to allow for great diversity and also to experience the mutual reinforcement of three key relationships, which are: with each other, with God and with the world beyond the group. Lewin (2006:107) discusses the sensitivity to change, which may affect security and which is even more fundamental than economic or physical survival. Lewin (2006:207) explains that one of the characteristics of belonging is that the same individual generally belongs to many groups. For instance, a person may belong economically to the upper middle class, be a member of a small family, which is part of a larger family, and which may be concentrated in a few towns.

cannibalism has taken place because of a desperate lack of food (Lam. 2:11, 20; 4:4, 10). Young men and women have been killed, sent into exile or given hard labour (5:13). Both poetic and psychological reversal have taken place, so that in Lam. 5:3 mothers become widows and children have become fatherless or orphans.

As well as family groupings, people mentioned in the lyrics are drawn together by racial and national bonds, are socially connected by city boundaries and geographically situated through demarcations and land-marks. The people, including the *'almānāh* and the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, are affiliated with the city of Jerusalem (1:7, 8, 17; 2:10, 13, 15; 4:12), the city of peace (*yərûšālaim*) set on two hills. The *'almānāh*, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* and *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-'ammî* are mourning the lack of protection from a previously powerful city stronghold, where they also worshipped at the sacred site of the ancient temple mount known as Zion (1:4, 6, 17; 2:1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 18; 4:2,11, 22; 5:11, 18). The *geḇer* engages in *Begründung* (3:58-62) in his individual plea for mercy from the confines of a pit, enclosed by watery chaos (3:53, 54), but his plea becomes a demand for vengeance (3:64-66). He pleads as a representative of humankind, as part of living creation and as a wounded warrior who finds himself imprisoned. In the fifth lyric the people are reminiscing over the tragedies that have happened in Zion, a place where 'God reigns over the nations' (Ps. 47:9). They are remembering the temple where *yhwh* dwells and listens to the praises of his people (Ps. 9:11), but they are actually seeing the holy city in its desecration, rape and desolation (Lam. 5:11, 18).

The boundaries of the land of Judah are no longer recognisable during this period of exile (1:3), because *yhwh* has despised his people (1:15) and trodden down the borders which make them distinguishable from other nations. This fragmented people are lamenting their wasted land (2:2, 5) rather than praising *yhwh*, as the name *yəhûḏāh* might suggest (Gen. 29:35). A rift has appeared between place and people, between land and inhabitants. A rupture has come in between heaven and earth in the rule of *yiśrā'ēl*. The country has become powerless, so that the people like the *'almānāh* are in a *liminal* state, and for the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* there is a lacuna in their relationships. Judah and Israel are set in contradistinction with territories outside Israel. Other nations are named, such as Sodom (4:6), as a reminder of sudden destruction and Edom, recalling earlier conflicts of Jacob (Israel) with his elder

brother Esau (Edom, Gen. 25:25-26; Lam. 4:21-22). The Land of Uz (Lam. 4:6, 21) links with the story of Job's suffering, Egypt is a reminder of the outcry of the people under slavery and the exodus story of deliverance, and Assyria brings to mind previous invasions (5:6). This steady flow of reminders of devastation, destruction and common experiences of suffering, bring people together in solidarity against adversity.[215]

There is a build-up from the previous four Lamentation lyrics towards this final lyric. From the third person lament concerning the lonely *'almānāh* in the first lyric there is a clear sense of loss of national identity. Cumulatively, others are blamed for her abandoned state. The cry 'her enemies are now the masters' from the first Lamentation (1:5), becomes a communal complaint in the words: 'our heritage has passed to aliens, our homes to strangers' in the fifth Lamentation (5:2). In the second Lamentation, the walls (2:7, 8, 18) and strongholds (2:2, 5) surrounding the city, which previously protected *bat̲-ṣiyyôn*, have been demolished (2:7, 8, 18), making her vulnerable and in danger of abuse. *Yhwh* is named as her enemy (2:4-5) and the struggle with anger and shame in their relationship rages bitterly to the end of the book (5:22), where the tensions still raise questions over the uncertainty of, but concern for, reconciliation (5:21). In the third Lamentation the *geber* fought back despite the fact that he was ignominiously 'walled in', trapped and imprisoned (3:7, 9, 53, 55), but he too joins the *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* community of people who cannot hide their loss of status. The metaphorical crown of honour, which had symbolically encircled the head of *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* has fallen (5:16). The king has gone into exile (2:9), thus leaving the city exposed to an inescapable fate, where everything is out of control and jackals prowl over the sacred places (5:18). The gates of the city have gone, so that not only has the entrance and exit changed, but also the public place of meeting for the officials and people of the town has gone, so that rules and laws relating to the people's existence have broken down.

Religious culture has also been diminished, because the Tabernacle and Sanctuary have been invaded and destroyed (1:10). Sabbaths are mocked by enemies (1:7) and festivals have come to an end (2:6). The priests are mocked or even murdered in the

[215] See 1 Sam. 22:2 where those in straits, in debt and in desperate situations joined David, as he hid in the cave of Adullam in his escape from Saul. See also a Christian equivalent in Matt. 11:28-30.

course of fulfilling their duties in the sanctuary. The *bənê ṣiyyôn* and *baṯ-'ammî* join the *ḥerpāṯēnû* in a depressed life-style, where valuable assets are strewn in the street, people are abused (4:1, 5:11) and wild animals make their dens in the spoiled city (4:3; 5:18). The wounds of war have not yet healed over and the scars of oppression are still being talked about (5:12-16).

Throughout the five Lamentations the poet is externalising memories of past times before fragmentation had taken place, prior to the loss of land and posterity, when home, family, sanctuary and temple (all that is viewed as inheritance within the community) was secure. Lamentations 5 then brings to *yhwh*'s notice individuals and groups belonging to the community in disgrace, people who are still suffering in the present uncomfortable situation. The final section forms an *inclusio*, which reads back into the previous four lyrics and retraces the aspects of grief back and forth across the curves of the hermeneutical helix. The *'almānāh* in her loneliness and abandonment feels she has been 'forsaken for all time' (5:20). *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s experience of *yhwh* is still that he 'bitterly raged against us' (5:22). The *geber* continually bargains to 'renew our days as of old' (5:21), whilst *bənê ṣiyyôn* and *baṯ-'ammî* join the complaint with the words: 'you have rejected us' (5:22).

As the family or social unit is divested of its security, loneliness becomes a problem to be accepted by society (1:12 5:1-22): it is not just an individual's suffering (1:1). The Lamentations lyrics focus on both male and female people groups, thus bringing insight to the more private and domestic life of orphans, fatherless, mothers, widows, youths, slaves, and aliens. It is not just the public and communal life of the people, which as Meyers (1992:245) points out, is dominated by kings, warriors, priests, prophets and sages. Despite the fact that these authorities have gone, there is a hidden expectation that shame and violation will be dealt with justly in community, so that a position of dignity is restored. The plea-bargaining started by the *'almānāh* in her cry 'Behold and see' (1:12), and maintained throughout the lyrics (particularly by the *geber*), intensifies, as in the final lyric the fight is not only in words, but also in group action (5:19-22). Desolation brings about desperate strategies for survival. There is an attempt at reconciliation through the acknowledgement of blame, not only of the political alliances (5:6-7) and *yhwh*'s anger and rejection (5:22), but also of the people's own failure (5:16).

8.3 Lamentation or Complaint

The communal complaint in Lamentations 5 could be seen as yet another positive attempt to restore relationships between *yhwh* and the community, as it re-iterates refrains of lament expressed by individuals in previous lyrics. The opening stanza of 'remember … behold and see' (5:1) links to the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*'s complaint that *yhwh* 'did not remember his footstool' (2:1). *Yhwh* is asked to 'Behold' and 'See' by the lonely *'almānāh* (1:9, 11, 20), through the anger and shame of *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (2:20) and by the bargaining *geber* (3:59-61, 63), but notably and conversely the depressed *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî* do not have the energy to plead in this way. The collective name *ḥerpāṯēnû*, although less concrete, draws on groups mentioned in the previous four Lamentations lyrics. These and other groups of people are also developed throughout the rest of the fifth poem.

The acrostic framework in the situation of disorientation has acted as a container for the overflow of emotion and protest, but Lamentations 5 takes on the petitionary form of communal lament. So it opens with the Address to *yhwh* (5:1), then moves to the section which includes Lament-Confession-Petition (5:2-18, 21), then there is an avowal of Assurance and Praise (5:19), but finally returns to a petition and further question rather than Praise (5:22). Lam. 5:1 provides more affirmative freedom to boldly and openly address *yhwh* with the expectation that the petition will be fulfilled. There is determination and assurance to wait for *yhwh*'s response in a situation of hopeless collapse, as in Psalm 88. In contradistinction, in Psalm 30, when the prayer is heard the lament is changed to praise. This is metaphorically indicated by a celebration of dancing and a change of clothing from sackcloth to 'garments of joy' (Ps. 30:12). Lamentations stays with the reverse idea that prayer has not yet been heard, on the contrary, dancing has turned to mourning (Lam. 5:15) and the sequence of plea to praise has not yet taken place. Old uncertainties have not yet been broken, and the spectrum of emotions has not yet been fully explored.[216] Cross-culturally this liminality is illustrated by the imagery in the words of the poet Arapovic (2008:167-8), as he writes about what he sees as an eyewitness of the wars in Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina during the period 1991 to 1995:

[216] See 6:3 on the reconnaissance and inquisition of the *geber*.

darkness was writing all our pages
illustrated
illuminated
by miniatures of gallows and skeletons
along the lines blackened by smoke
in place of each full stop a gaping abyss
exclamation points replaced by
question marks sticking up in the air
while owls hoot from consonants
and owlets sit among vowels …

A lack of positive closure of a text in the Hebrew Bible is rather unusual, since the prophetic and wisdom books in particular, usually end on a more positive note. For example, Jeremiah (52:34) celebrates food provision; Daniel (12:12): allotted inheritance; Isaiah (66:22-24): survival for new horizons, and the Psalms (150:6) emphasise that God should be praised by everything that breathes.

The fifth lyric opens with a protest, asking *yhwh* not to 'forget' Jerusalem. Throughout the rest of the poem the idea of the hope that *yhwh* will become involved in recovery and reconciliation is developed. I would not go so far as to say that refiguration has actually taken place yet, or that plea has turned to praise. However, I would say that there is evidence of new relationships between groups and individuals.

8.4 Psychological Acceptance, Recovery and Re-investment

Kübler-Ross and Backer et al. (1982:22) in their discussion on people in the final grief stage of 'acceptance' suggest that 'having worked through the preceding stages, the time will come when death is accepted'. The changes from previous lyrics apparent in Lam. 5:1, are a reminder of the tension of order and disorder, but could also intimate that there is now an orientation towards harmony. It is as if the textual and psychological trajectories never were apart, as they join together in a united human struggle to survive. Joyce (1993:309) concurs that the stage of acceptance is 'a quiet time of detachment, a sense of resignation or "letting go"'. Kübler-Ross (1989:100) emphasises that these changes of life patterns, however, should not be mistaken for a happy stage. In Lamentations 5 there is a sense in which the activity has slowed down and become quieter. It is a period almost devoid of feelings, as if the pain has gone

and the struggle is over. It is what Glaser and Strauss (1968:5-6) describe as 'a dying trajectory', which takes place over time, whose shape 'moves slowly, moving slightly up and down before diving downward radically'. On the other hand, Kübler-Ross (1986:50) notes that there is still a search for meaning and significance.

Brueggemann (1977:268) explains 'acceptance' as 'a mood in which the fighting ceases'. But does fighting cease in Lamentations 5? Brueggemann goes on to expand the idea: 'it is not chagrined resignation but an affirmation of the all-rightness of what is going on. It is a *surrender* of self-sufficiency but also *reconciliation*'. But throughout Lamentations 5 there is no permanent reconciliation, no settled all-rightness. *Ḥerpāṯēnû* are still showing signs of oppression and depression, so that they feel they are social outcasts (5:2), exhausted (5:5), dependent on others for survival (5:6), abused (5:11, 13) and disrespected (5:12). Loneliness and desolation (5:18, 22), bargaining (5:19-22), anger, guilt and shame (5:1, 16, 22) are still being played out.

Parkes and Weiss (1983:155-6) propose three tasks, which they suggest form part of this process of recovery from bereavement. Firstly, the loss must be accepted intellectually, in other words it must make sense, and I am not sure that it does make sense for the *ḥerpāṯēnû* in their setting of loss of inheritance and community. Secondly, the loss must be accepted emotionally, so that there is no longer any need to avoid reminders of loss for fear of being flooded by grief, pain or remorse, but there are still many concrete reminders of the tragedy that has taken place, which still cause tensions in the lyrics. Thirdly, the individual's model of self and the outer world must change to correspond with the new worldview, but the outlook right to the end still comprises isolation, anger, bargaining (5.22) and depression.

Worden (1983)[217] sees the work of bereavement in terms of tasks rather than stages. He recognises four tasks. Firstly, to accept the reality of the loss, secondly, to experience the pain of grief, thirdly, to adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing and fourthly, to withdraw emotional energy and reinvest in other activities and relationships. However, as has been demonstrated, the final lyric does

[217] See also Archer's discussion on the resolution of grief (1999:112-116).

not reveal acceptance or adjustment to the bereavement, but retains the conflict between form and content, grief and acceptance, mourning and celebration, fighting and surrender, disengagement and reconciliation, right to the end. There is no short cut or premature escape if recovery rather than recursion is the aim. However, the signs are that change is taking place, because the coping strategies become less dominant, the cries become more outward and objective and the imagery continues to act out its grief.

There has been an element of change, since the imagery of the city and people in Lam. 1:1 was of a lonely widow, abandoned by *yhwh*, but in Lam. 5:3 she now becomes part of a community of *'almānôṯ* who cry out in solidarity. The pain of isolation is thus shared. A shamed and uncelebrated Daughter Zion in Lamentations 2 needs new social, political and religious horizons. In her experience of fiery anger she has lost the security of her encircling city walls and the demarcation of her geographical boundaries, so that in Lamentations 5 there is no mention of Jerusalem, Judah and Israel. Nevertheless, in the communal complaint[218] of Lamentations 5 there is transfer of anger to Egypt and Assyria (5:6). They are named and blamed for the disgrace of Zion's loss of national identity. The *Begründung* and war strategy of a suffering and wounded warrior in Lamentations 3 becomes more direct in Lamentations 5 through the threefold plea addressed to *yhwh* to 'Remember … behold and see'. The oppressed and depressed people in the wilderness conditions of Lamentations 4 become part of the grieving community, which in Lamentations 5 draws attention to their state, as the people are named 'our disgrace'.

Sustained hope for the future is not yet in view, instead, at the end of this final lyric, where the framework is no longer fully sustained, writers and readers[219] may find themselves still wishing for an ending, an urgent longing for the cessation of grief.

[218] Brueggemann (1977:266) cites Gerstenberger's (1963:405) suggestion that a lament 'bemoans a tragedy which cannot be reversed, while a complaint entreats God for help in the midst of tribulation'. Brueggemann suggests that a lament is accepting the situation as it is, whilst a complaint insists and expects that the situation will change.

[219] As Kermode (1989:81) says, 'Mere cessation is not satisfying - one hankers after … some sense that a potential has been actualized, that ending has conferred order and consonance on the beginning and the middle'. This is exactly why the helix is an appropriate shape, since at the end of a chapter, phase or stage one can choose to go forward towards a new experience or return to what may be a seemingly disordered or unfinished part of a previous experience. There is a sense of '*le texte me semble absurde ou d'un style que je ne puis plus supporter*' (Valéry, *Mon Faust* quoted in Kermode 1989:71).

Nevertheless, the threefold, sanctioned formula of petition, does not provide an unobstructed circular path from lamentation to celebration, or from plea to praise. It has not conferred linear order, or consonance with the worldview (prefiguration) or on the experience and understanding of grief. It has not been the passing experience of a cyclone, so exploration (configuration) continues on the helix without the potential of a new life-style (refiguration) being actualised.

This chapter will now continue to assess whether *ḥerpāṯēnû* have changed to a new way of thinking and whether those in lament and grief continue in the safety of the frameworks until every fraction of grief and lament has been exhausted and complete recovery is made. A further in-depth analysis will now take place by using Anderson's (1991:49) five parallel rituals of lamentation and celebration as a measure.

8.5 Transition from Mourning Rituals to Celebration

Anderson (1991:42-5), in his work on the ritual expression of grief and joy in ancient Israelite religion, suggests that there are rituals which mark the transition of a person from one state to another. In other words, there are symbols which indicate the completion of a rite of passage: in this context from mourning to celebration. There is an expectation, therefore, that the behavioural aspects of mourning will need to be fulfilled from *aleph* to *tav*, from stages 1-5, before a person or community such as *'almānāh*, *baṯ-ṣiyyôn*, *geber*, *bənê ṣiyyôn/baṯ-'ammî* or *ḥerpāṯēnû* can enter into the activities of a festival or enjoy happy relations with the community and with *yhwh/'ādōnāy*. Anderson suggests that there are five such rituals, whose symbols appear in all five Lamentations lyrics and indicate that mourning is taking place. I suggest that the configuration of these five rituals takes place throughout the lyrics right to the end of Lam. 5:22. This indicates that whilst mourning is still taking place, the conflict between mourning and celebration still continues. This tension between the external form of rite and ritual and the inner turmoil of feelings and emotions become apparent in the poet's imagery in the text and the reader's engagement and response.

Anderson (1991:49) posits that 'in behavioural aspects the two ritual states [of mourning and celebration] parallel each other' as five symbols in the Hebrew Bible.

These symbols are juxtaposed as: fasting/eating and drinking, putting ashes and dust on one's head/anointing with oil, wearing sackcloth or torn clothes/wearing festal garments, enjoying sexual relations/abstaining from sexual relations, and lamentation/praise of God. Anderson (1991:43) goes on to explain that mourning and celebration are mutually exclusive in the Hebrew Bible, so that public praise as a joyous act is forbidden during a time of mourning. It is something that the person can take a vow to do in the future, but not until the transition from mourning to praise has been made. In psychological grief too, there are phases and stages that need to be experienced and recovered from, before acceptance of a changed world-view can take place. Do these five symbols help in understanding whether lamentation and grief have come to an end?

8.5.1 Fasting, or Eating and Drinking

Abstinence from food can be a sign of mourning or it can be a religious observance, as in an appointed fast. Anderson (1991:100) maintains that fasting is for moments of crisis, as in times of military defeat, during drought, famine, plagues or other natural disasters. Anderson (1991:2-3) poignantly questions whether from an anthropological perspective human beings actually have a choice in the emotional experience and behavioural expression of grief and lament. On the one hand, fasting is an outward sign of an intense inner hunger for a spiritual experience demonstrated by means of a voluntary religious ritual. This is reflected, intertestamentally, through the imagery of stones and bread, when Jesus chose to go hungry in the wilderness of temptation at a time of special prayer and fasting. Interreligiously, fasting is also visibly and symbolically present in the Muslim period of Ramadan, in the Buddhist search for enlightenment, and in Gandhi's registered protest against violence and defence of pacifism. On the other hand, this so-called 'fasting' could actually be 'starvation': a struggle for survival against an externally imposed régime of food deprivation, such as famine through crop failure, through disease, or through starvation as social, religious or political punishment. Bonhoeffer's (1995:515) poem written in July 1944 during a time in Tegel prison in Berlin, develops the theme of communing with God in feasting and fasting:

> All people go to God in need, (humanity needing God)
> For help and calm and food they plead.

That sickness, guilt and death may cease, …
But some turn to God in God's need and dread, (God needing humanity)
A God poor, despised, without roof or bread
By sin's harm weakened and by death distressed, …
God goes to all in their need and dread, (God and humanity needing
Their souls 'loving grace and their bodies' bread. … each other)

The above extract shows and explains the physical, psychological and spiritual needs of nourishment as expressed by humanity to God, then by God to humanity, so developing into hopeful mutual sustenance. During the fasting process of grief the question arises as to whether God gives food, takes food or shares food.

Through the expansion of imagery in this final lyric the skin of the people called 'our disgrace' is pictured through the simile 'black as an oven from the scorching heat of famine' (Lam. 5:10 NRSV). In Peter Martyr's translation and interpretation: 'our skins[220] blackened as an oven, from the face of the storm of famine', he compares the scorching of the leaves as a result of a hailstorm, with the hungry people whose skin becomes dried out in famine. During the Great Famine of Ireland in 1848, the physical effects of starvation were also recorded figuratively to emphasise the psychological effects. Crawford (1989:201) cites Dr Donovan: 'the skin exhaled a peculiar and offensive foetor, and was covered with a brownish filthy-looking coating, almost as indelible as varnish'. [221]

The *geber* also complains of broken teeth from eating stones, which develops into a two-fold eating dilemma. He is so hungry that he eats food contaminated with stones and in so doing he breaks his teeth, which in turn makes it difficult to eat at all. These figures of speech thus focus on externally visible signs of poor health and bad quality food in the frame of the *ḥerpāṯēnû*'s plea to *yhwh* to 'Remember' the past and to 'behold and see' the present dilemma. There is, therefore, a conflict intertextually between the worldview of *yhwh*'s constant provision,[222] their present lack of food and

[220] See also Job 30:30 'My skin, blackened is peeling off me; my bones are charred by the heat'.
[221] Crawford focuses on the biological effects of famine in Ireland during the Great Famine and describes not only the physical signs of famine and starvation and how such conditions contribute to secondary diseases, but also their psychological effects.
[222] See Brueggemann (1984:19, 20, 25) and his analysis of Psalms of 'orientation', as seasons of *well-being*, where God is reliable and trustworthy, Psalms of 'disorientation', or times of disarray, which may be an abrupt or a slowly dawning acknowledgement of changed circumstances and Psalms of 'new

their understanding of their rights to the land and its produce and it is debatable whether the people are starving rather than fasting.

The political boundaries for the *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* have changed, as they have been taken over by Assyria and Egypt. Statutorily, therefore, *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* must pay for water, beg for bread (5:6) or risk their lives; like the *geb̲er* (3:10, 11, 53) they are both predator and prey in the displaced setting of the wilderness. The people now hold out a hand to other nations, since widow Zion had previously found no support from her own people, although she spread out her hands (1:17) to *yhwh* and those around her. Life is fragile. The city's unfruitful experience reveals the *baṯ̲-ṣiyyôn* eating her own offspring (2:20) and the women cooking their children (4:10). The poet veils and unveils the cruel life of the *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ̲-ʻammî*, spectacularly, through the imagery of the hazardous survival of young ostriches, barely hatched from their vulnerable eggs (4:3) and the easy prey of the city's leaders, who are like stags without nourishment (1:6). The fight for survival in the wilderness between predator and prey is symbolised by the jackal in Lam. 4.3, still prowling in the desolation of Mount Zion in Lam. 5.18.

Famine and lack of celebration is so pronounced that 'babes and sucklings ...' ask their mothers 'where is bread and wine?' (2:12) but there are no sacraments of substitution, there is no healing and new life. The only sacrifice for the desolate city is the unbelievable idea of killing her own child, in order to survive herself. The people are searching for bread (1:11) and then gapping occurs textually, as wine is not mentioned, and psychologically, gladness and communion are absent. Some mothers are so desperate for food, that in the ultimate reversal for survival, cannibalism replaces the enjoyment of the provision of good food (2:20; 4:10). The social structure has undergone a revolution as young people struggle under the heavy burden of millstones and loads of wood (5:13), both of which would have been used for the preparation of food and warmth. This would also affect the religious structure relating to festal celebrations and ritual offerings to *yhwh*.

---

orientation', where there is fresh insight and hope and a surprising transformation brought into a situation of despair.

Crawford (1989:202) suggests that there are not only physical manifestations of hunger, such as sickness and heartburn (2:1, 19), but also desperate psychological effects, which lead to unhappiness and the deterioration of personal relationships. Dr. Donovan (Crawford 1989:202) observes:

> I have seen mothers snatch food from their starving children; known a son to engage in a fatal struggle with his father for a potato; and seen parents look on the putrid bodies of their offspring without evincing a symptom of sorrow.

Is this, as Alice Miller (1992:91) suggests, 'a sanctification of human sacrifice in order to gloss over the crimes of parents against their children?' Alternatively, could it be a manifestation of 'appetite disturbances', which Littlewood (1992:48)[223] includes in her range of aspects of grief?

Despite undergoing mourning rituals and fasting, the *ḥerpāṯēnû* still have no instant solutions in Lamentations 5. The *deus ex machina* moment has not yet arrived for the people, unlike in the case of Abraham and his son Isaac, when a substitutionary ram was provided for the sacrifice (Gen. 22:13). Meanwhile, for the *ḥerpāṯēnû* there is a need to wait; maybe for miraculous providence and new ways for posterity, as in the story where Elijah was fed by the ravens (1 Kgs. 17:6). *Ḥerpāṯēnû* have to live through the hardship of fasting (or starvation) in order to experience an inner hunger, as in the experience of the widow of Zarephath and her son, who went ahead with the hope that the flour and oil would last (1 Kgs. 17:16). Could Lamentations 5, through its imagery, become like the exodus experience, where a way of escape was found for the people, who in their hunger and thirst in wilderness conditions were miraculously provided a means of survival? Alternatively, for Christians, could it symbolise the Good Friday experience of emptiness, impending death and solitude, before the Easter resurrection and hope and the promised sustenance through the sacrament of bread and wine? But lament and grief are not just about fasting or eating and drinking.

[223] Littlewood suggests that the loss of appetite and under-eating, or over-eating, are physical manifestations of grief. Guest (2006:400) points out that psychological stress requires an outlet and that emotional reactions, such as faintness (Lam. 1:14) and churning insides (Lam. 2:11), are included in the Lamentations texts.

8.5.2 Ashes or Anointing Oil

Another symbol of mourning ritual is the use of the 'festive ointment' (TAN) or 'oil of gladness' (NRSV), which Anderson (1991:45) points out, 'marks the transition from one state to another'. In other words, the ritual of anointing with oil in the Hebrew Bible, is a symbol for the completion of a rite of passage, such as a completed period of healing and purification (Lev. 14:12-20). Anointing with oil took place publicly and in community, to symbolise a change of status, such as when an ordinary person was ordained as a priest (e.g. Aaron in Ex. 29:21), or given the authority of a ruler (e.g. Saul in 1 Sam. 10:1), or crowned as King (e.g. David in 2 Sam. 2:4). In Lamentations 5 the anointed priests of Lam. 1:19, 2:20 have gone, the elders are no longer at the gate (5:14) and the king is now in exile. It would appear that the anointing oil has lost its power to heal, through the imagery of 'our skin is hot as an oven', and to give wisdom, since the elders keep silence and put dust on their heads (Lam. 2:10). A sense of dignity is also absent through the figure: 'the crown has fallen from our head' (Lam. 5:16). The word for 'crown' (*'ăṭeret* Lam. 5:16) is a symbol of honour and stately splendour. In the poetic language of Psalm 21:3(4) *yhwh* has 'set upon his [the king's] head a crown of fine gold' and also placed a crown on the head of the High Priest, so that he will build the Temple (Zech. 6:11).

In Lamentations 1 the *'almānāh* appears to be sitting in the dust of grief and death (1:1, 9) and because the elders are covered in dust and the prophets are silent, there are no authorised persons to anoint with oil to mark rites of passage (2:10). The *geber* (3:16 KJV) complains that *yhwh* has 'covered me with ashes', but there is no further mention of ashes in the final Lamentation. Perhaps this is a vague indication of hope that mourning will soon come to an end. Although there is no direct reference to the anointing of oil, nevertheless, the claim: 'but You, O Lord are enthroned forever' (5:19) could show publicly through symbolism, that there is a definite concern for a new anointing[224] and a change in social and religious leadership. Just as Adam was created out of dust, so a new encircling of the city could take place out of chaos and a new rhythm of life could be expected out of desolation and barrenness.

[224] The idea of survival in troubled circumstances is reflected also in the Christian New Testament aspect of enduring temptation and gaining a crown of life (Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10).

Alternatively, because there is no mention of anointing oil in the text it could be interpreted as textual 'gapping' because olive oil for the anointing was no longer available, since crops of olives had been plundered and spoiled. In any case, burnt offerings were no longer offered in the sanctuary, as it had been burnt to ashes and pounded to dust. The symbolic dust and ashes of mourning seem to be in better supply than the oil. However, there is no further mention in Lamentations 5 of the destruction of the walls that surround Jerusalem (2:7, 8, 18). Could there be a hint that the city is looking for change? Could the people be on the brink of the completion of a rite of passage, so that, as in the words of Isaiah (62:2-6), the time has come when the city will have a new name and will be encircled with honour once again. They will no longer be forsaken, but will re-engage in love relationships, rebuild the walls of the city and have a new identity.

This symbolism is matched on the psychological trajectory and Green and Green (1992:152) in their work on the pattern of grief today suggest that 'anointing is regarded as a preparation for something special, for some life-affecting event'. They explain that it could be performed 'before a major operation, at childbirth, or if the patient is returning home again after surgery or a long illness'. In such situations the anointing of olive oil[225] becomes a symbol or sacrament of faith and hope in recovery. In a cross cultural situation the use of olive oil[226] may be replaced by the use of other symbols of healing or blessing such as, the lighting of candles or the laying on of hands.

8.5.3 Sackcloth or Festal Garments

The wearing of mourning garments is well known as an important ritual during a period of grief. They offer another indication of boundaries crossed, but also limits that are set by the wearer. Mourning garments will vary according to culture and local custom, so for example, some will wear white clothing,[227] whilst others dress in

[225] Oils other than olive oil may become important, symbolically, for healing and life-affecting events in other cultures, because of their availability e.g. coconut oil, tea tree oil, or eucalyptus oil.
[226] See Pss. 23:5, 104:14, 133:2 as examples of oil as a blessing in community.
[227] Green and Green in their work on *Dealing with Death* suggest that 'a widow in Islam is expected to mourn for 130 days, dressing with simplicity and without jewellery' and that for a Hindu 'White clothing is worn, as a sign of mourning, for the first 10 days. The widow and eldest son may shave their heads. Sikhs also wear white as a sign of mourning'.

black.[228] Some wear sombre colours, garments made of coarse material or unwashed clothes, whilst some may shed clothing. In the Hebrew Bible, the symbolic wearing of sackcloth[229] (2:10) or torn clothes, was a sign of mourning. Job (16:15) in his suffering wore sackcloth before he acknowledged that a change of attitude was needed, so that he could enjoy life again (Job 42:6). The psalmist cries to *yhwh* for help. He acknowledges that his recovery involves a change of image in the declaration: 'you [*yhwh*] turned my lament into dancing, you [*yhwh*] undid my sackcloth and girded me with joy' (Ps. 30:12). At a time when King Hezekiah called 'a day of distress, of chastisement and of disgrace' he 'rent his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth' (Isa. 37:1-2) and prayed to *yhwh* for safety and assurance. The people of Nineveh wanted to save their city, so as a sign that they had turned from evil, they wore not only sackcloth themselves, but also put it on their animals.[230] There are also links with the New Testament where John the Baptist, in order to indicate his concern for the people's repentance and in preparation for the advent of a new world view, wore a camel hair shirt and leather belt (Matt. 3:4). Gandhi, in his representation of peace, wore a simple loincloth. It maybe that, just as Adam and Eve wore a covering of fig leaves as a sign of a new era and then were clothed in animal skins as an acceptance of banishment from the garden, so garments are symbols of the outward expression of dramatic isolation and inner turbulence.

Throughout Lamentations the city is covered with metaphorical mourning garments. The *'almānāh* (1:1) is symbolically wrapped in her loneliness, her face framed with the black veil of the night (1:2), her cheeks covered with tears and her body clothed in a dirty skirt (1:9). The widows in Lam. 5:3 are obviously recognisable, possibly by their dress,[231] but they are in a group. *Yhwh* has covered *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* (2:1) with a cloud of shame, with fire and anger; she has a veiled identity, so that her beauty and her intimate relationship with *yhwh* are hidden. Her elders are covered with sackcloth and her girls have heads bowed, clothed in submission (2:10). At the same time the anger

[228] Spenser in *Daphnaïda* (38-40) uses black garments to convey the sorrow of mourning: 'Most miserable man; I did espie/ Where towards me a sory wight did cost, / Clad all in black, that mourning did bewray'. Also Chaucer in the *Duchess* (444-7) 'so at last/ I was war of a man in blak/ and he was clothed al in blakke'.
[229] See Dan. 9:3 where sackcloth was worn in the desolation of Jerusalem in recognition of the shame.
[230] See Jon. 3:7-9: the king's decree was also that the flocks and herds were not to graze or drink water.
[231] Huddlestun (2002:47) in a consideration of the Judah/ Tamar story notes that garments play a pivotal role as markers of status and authority by which identities are revealed and concealed. See also a note on Tamar in 4.4 of the *'almānāh* chapter.

of *yhwh* is uncovered, revealing hot feelings that must be dealt with. *Baṯ-ṣiyyôn* is also encouraged to bare her heart in a dual sense of clothing and unclothing. The *geber*, however, sees *yhwh* as clothed with anger and screened off from him by a cloud (3:44), whereas the *geber*'s own clothing is worn out flesh and skin (3:4). Such images suggest that people become like the garments that cover them, like the prophets and priests who wear garments defiled with blood (4:13-14).

Matthews (1995:25) in his work on the Joseph narrative makes the point that 'humans address themselves, their community and their world by the choice or style of their clothing'. He (1995:29) traces the motif of clothing to highlight the theme of Joseph's rise to a position of favour, his precipitous fall and his rise again to a position of power and influence. He asserts that the garment motif[232] is central to the narrative and is used explicitly to signal changes of status. In my view, this is illuminating in the explanation and understanding of the Lamentations text too. Fontanier's (1968:174) idea that tropes are clothed in richer or duller colours, also adds to the interest in metaphorical garments. The *'almānāh* once dressed as a princess now wears widow's garments. The *bənê ṣiyyôn* and *baṯ-'ammî*, once dressed in purple, are so scantily clad that their bones and dry, shrivelled skin are visible (Lam. 4:8). The priests, who once wore the holy garments of office, have now become 'untouchables' in their defilement (4:13-14). Keats (1807) in the poem *To Hope* writes:

> When by my solitary hearth I sit,
> And hateful thoughts enwrap my soul in gloom.

Keats encapsulates the idea of being wrapped up in gloom, just as the Lamentations poet clothes the city with aspects of grief. Henle (1958:176) suggests that Keats' 'metaphorical expression *enwrap* consists in presenting sorrow as if enveloping the soul in a cloak'. Ricoeur (2003:223) in his discussion on the work of resemblance and the iconic movement of metaphor, suggests that the essential role of such icons is 'to contain an internal duality that at the same time is overcome'. In Lamentations 5 although there is no direct reference to sackcloth, tears or weeping, the implication is that there is a covering of sadness and heaviness, rather than festal attire. The reader

[232] Matthews explains that clothing can be a simple indicator of gender, (Deut. 22:5), a sign of employment (2 Sam. 20:8 – 'a soldier's garment'; Ex. 28:31-42 'priestly vestments'), or on the symbolic level, as a means of visual communication.

is led by iconic duality of rich clothing and wizened skin, priestly clothing and dirty garments, to understand that joy has disappeared, hearts are sick, eyes are dimmed and dancing has become mourning (5:15).

Although *yhwh* is no longer depicted as clothed in anger (3:43), but robed like a king (5:19) and the blame for the disaster has now shifted to Assyria and Egypt, nevertheless, he is still accused of bitter rage and rejection (5:22). However, the bitterness of the *'almānāh* and the *geber* are no longer referred to in the community setting of Lamentations 5. Psychologically, these admissions could be a very important part of recovery: a realisation that the façade of convention must be relinquished. The coping structure of cold anger, caustic, barbed remarks and entrenched bitterness has faded, but the outer clothing of celebration cannot be worn while the skin, heart and eyes show signs of famine. Symbolically, celebration cannot yet take place whilst there are symptoms of grief.

8.5.4 Sexual Continence or Sexual Relations

Situations of death, injury and sickness, such as in war and natural disaster, will have serious impact on relationships. In our text this is apparent as the imagery *ḥerpāṯēnû* is developed through the metonymy of 'orphans, fatherless … widows' (5:3), 'ravished women' (5:11), 'hanged princes' (5:12) and staggering youths (5:13). Throughout the five lyrics there have been experiences of abandonment, rejection and abuse, so that sexual relationships have been made forcibly absent and in contradistinction through rape, sexual acts have been violently imposed. The 'virgin daughter Judah' (1:15 NRSV) is described as 'a woman untouched, but you let her be trampled' (1:15b CEV). In her vulnerability she has become socially bound. In the place of fruitfulness and fecundity there is emptiness and barrenness. Feelings of guilt have replaced a sense of well-being and culpability has over-ridden a sense of responsibility.

The struggle to re-build intimate relationships after loss and abuse is still evident in the tortuous pathway of grief and lament portrayed to the end of Lamentations 5. The expectation in the Hebrew Bible is that there will be provision made for the *'almānāh* to re-marry and have children and thus not be excluded from family and social life.

However, obligations of levirate marriage[233] rely on the co-operation of the family, especially the husband's brother, either to marry her, or perform the ceremony, so that she is free to marry outside of the family and thus does not become a sociological misfit. Thus the abstinence from sexual relations as part of the mourning ceremony removes part of the framework of the life cycle, so that joy, relationship and pro-creation are inhibited in order to concentrate on a sad landscape of ruins and the decomposition of creation. The question of re-engagement is still in the balance, as the final request of the poem is: 'Take us back … And let us come back' (5:21).

8.5.5 Lamentation or Praise of God

The conflict between lamentation and praise is not over yet. As a sign of creative power and as a means of communication in prayer the *'almānāh* (1:17) and the *bat-ṣiyyôn* (2:19) spread out their hands[234] in prayer to *yhwh* just as Moses did during a time of oppression before the exodus (Ex. 9:29, 33). Solomon also lifted up his hands to *yhwh* in a two-way promise of devotion before the dedication of the Temple (I Kgs. 8:22) and so did Ezra (Ezra 9:5) over the impending invasion of Assyria and the Psalmist (88:10) in his rejection. As Morris (2008:100) points out: 'hands are not only a tool of creativity, but they are also used in communication between God and human beings'. However, by way of contrast, *yhwh* had a change of mood and seemingly used his hands to work destruction against his people (Lam. 1:10, 14; 2:3, 4, 7; 8; 3:3), so that they become valueless (4:2). Neighbouring nations are summoned to a festival by *yhwh* to celebrate their successful plan to annihilate Israel (2:7, 22). The enemy powers also gloated over and despised the city (1:7, 10; 2:15) and the oppressed women (4:10) used their hands for survival in the de-creation of their children.

In addition to the plea gesture to *yhwh*, the *'almānāh* lets her voice be heard and asks others 'to behold' and 'to see'. This lament has been translated cross-culturally through the words and music of Handel's Messiah throughout the ages, thus engaging voices from other times and places and widening the circle of listeners. *Bat-ṣiyyôn* reiterates the grief cries that '[*yhwh*] has increased mourning and moaning' through

[233] See Chapter 4:4 for examples of Judah and Tamar, Ruth and Boaz although I have not explored the success rate of Levirate marriage.
[234] See Chapter 4.5.1 for more detail on the symbolic creativity of hands and their power as tools of communication.

the onomatopoeia of *ta'ăniyyāh wa'ăniyyāh* (2:5) and continues with a double plea 'See, O Lord, and behold' (2:20). The *geber*, however, remembers how things were before the disaster and lapses into a wisdom format of praise of *yhwh*, as he recalls experiences of hope, mercy, kindness, grace and goodness (3:21-25). This memory does not last for long, because he returns (3:42-47) to the problem of lack of forgiveness, lack of pity, abandonment and anger - a wall through which bargaining cannot penetrate. The *geber* ends Lamentations 3 with a request for vengeance and cursing of the enemies (3:64-66) and Lamentations 4 closes with a hint that the *bənê ṣiyyôn/bat-'ammî* have suffered enough (4:22). The final lyric opens with a threefold plea to *yhwh* to 'remember … behold and see' and there is a glimmer of praise in

> But You, O lord are enthroned forever,
> Your throne endures through the ages. (5:19)

but then the lyric quickly returns to the accusation that *yhwh* has forgotten and forsaken them, which denies that the restoration to praise has taken place.

8.6 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter there has been a discussion about whether suffering and lamentation are brought to a close, thus ushering in a dénouement of reconciliation and celebration. I have argued that the introductory stanza (5:1) sets the scene for a more communal and expansive approach to recovery, with commitment to a change in life-style. It has been demonstrated that family, social and national bonds have been broken, but new relationships have been formed. Groups of people differing in sexuality, age and religious leanings and from a variety of backgrounds are drawn together as a result of alienation and fragmentation, as they act out together in defiance of opposition and in response to bereavement. This happens not only in the text, but can also be read back into the text from grief experience in our global world today. In their grief, such people can positively cry out to God and tell others about their troubles. By juxtaposing the two ritual states of mourning and celebration from five aspects, the conflict of despair and hope is examined in more detail, so that a recovery assessment can be made.

As Kermode (in Alter and Kermode 1989:81) suggests: 'mere cessation is not satisfying - one hankers after … some sense that a potential has been actualized, that ending has conferred order and consonance on the beginning and the middle'. Does coming to the end of the reading of the five lyrics mean that the process of lamentation ends and the reflection of grief also ceases? Has order been restored and consonance regained? From the analysis throughout this chapter we have seen that there are glimmers of hope, but the text encourages lamentation to continue and grief still to be expressed back and forth through the configuration of acrostic form, grief cries and imagery.

There is no denial, that in the expectation of a solution, some will look for an escape from the lamentation ritual, from religious and social prohibitions, or the various mourning stages of grief. Some may feel that they are psychologically 'stuck' in the treadmill of repetition, social taboos and unresolved conflicts. Exum (1992:5, 9) suggests that life goes on, despite the resistance to closure and the lack of neatness, just as created life came out of chaos in Genesis 1. Walters (1997:32)[235] adds that 'an important aspect of bereavement is the acceptance of unfulfilled expectations' and the ability to talk about dashed hopes. Although Lamentations comes to an abrupt ending, I am proposing that there is no sudden celebration of recovery and praise, but rather a continued change, as the concern for a renewal of relationships is developed in place of tears and bitterness. Perhaps this is the change of world-view, the dénouement, the *deus ex machina*, which Lamentations 5 presents to the reader in our world today.

My conclusion is that despite the glimmers of hope, the time is not yet right for a total move to celebration and acceptance. While the pain of loss and the voiced lament is still taking place it would be inappropriate and even harmful to close down the acting out of grief. Ultimately, however, it is for the reader and for individuals and communities in their situations of lament and grief, who must decide when the timing is right. The next and concluding chapter of this thesis will show how this reading of

[235] Walters suggests that in Lk:13-27 when 'the two on the way to Emmaus' did not recognise Jesus because of their grief-stricken mental state, Jesus did not reveal himself straight away. Their grief was not denied, since they had a chance to talk about their feelings and their dashed hopes.

Lamentations is only the beginning of a process of expressing lament and understanding grief in our world today.

9. Conclusion

> By closure, then, we do not mean a simple forgetting. Antze and Lambek

9.1 On-going Tensions in Frameworks

This literary and psychological reading of the five chapters of Lamentations using the conceptual form of a helix has come to a close, but the final cry of 'Restore us … that we may be restored' (Lam. 5:22 NRSV) is still echoing from text to reader and from reader to text. Although the imposed order of the lament and grief frameworks is less noticeable in the final lyric than in the previous four lyrics, nevertheless, there is still an overflowing of spontaneous emotion. My conclusion is that it is important to stay with the tensions of all five Lamentations, because although grief has gone through many stages and phases and has changed, it does not suddenly come to an end. The outlook may have become more positive and the people passing through phases and stages of grief may have become more hopeful, but I conclude that the process of lament and grief has not been brought to a conclusion. An occasion for total public celebration and complete private acceptance has not yet arrived in the Lamentations text.

Despite the fact that the frameworks of acrostic and grief stages have become less significant, the helix still remains as a model for re-reading the Lamentations texts and for coping with conflicts of trauma and disaster. Just as Roland Barthes' interpretation of pictures of current events goes beyond the immediate impression of caricatures and symbols and discovers further meanings, so the use of frameworks, cries and imagery in Lamentations has more significance than an initial reading might suggest. Likewise, throughout this thesis, questions concerning life, death and survival have been configured as a way of seeing things from different standpoints. In a multi-cultural world today in on-going conflicts and in settings of trauma and disaster, there will always be need for fresh translation and alternative interpretation, in order to be able to listen to, see and understand human grief.

The hermeneutical helix has provided a model which has demonstrated how the tensions between the form and content of Lamentations 1-5 reflect the struggles between predictable patterns and spontaneous grief expressions in our world today (see Chapters 1-2). Because of its repetitive and open-ended form, the helix matches

the Lamentations text and its mimetic emotional experiences of grief. This flexible on-going process for the expression of lament and grief is in contradistinction to other shapes, such as a uni-directional linear idea of deed and consequence,[236] a non-negotiable situation as in picture and frame, a closed circle of plea to praise, or a cyclone image which assumes a peaceful 'eye' in the middle of a storm. However, both the acrostic *aleph* to *tav* form and the stages 1-5 of grief were seen to be somewhat mechanical and perhaps too tightly controlled to be sustained, so the ordered structure was interrupted by sounds of weeping and plaintiff cries uttered by symbolic men, women and children in a devastated community.

My critical reading began with an assessment of the translation of some key words from the Hebrew text in Lamentations in some representative Bible versions accessible to me, with the help of the interpretation of secondary texts. These key words, which represent grief cries and metaphorical images of loss, link the lyrics thematically to each other and to other poetry.[237] An analysis of the translations of these key words has demonstrated that ancient poetic lament patterns that could have been lost, grief cries that could have been silenced, and images of bereavement and loss that could have been veiled, can be brought back to life and still have new significance and even become public discourse in the languages and cultures of today.

9.2 An Emerging Cross-cultural Hermeneutic

The reader has come within ear-shot of a variety of translations and interpretations of lament and grief cries, which demand that attention be paid to what is happening in a particular crisis. They are cries, which through poetry, defy the passage of time, so they are not just archived and forgotten, but translated and remembered. It has been demonstrated that poetic cries, such as *'êkāh*, *'ănî ... 'ŏnî* and *zə<u>k</u>ōr ... habbeṭ ûrə'ēh* drawn from the culture of a people, can become appropriate and understandable cross-culturally.[238] A variety of translations: 'How!' 'Alas!' 'Alone', and 'Oh, oh, oh', 'I

[236] Eco (1992:27) explains further the definition of the world in terms of causes. Here simply the idea of a unilinear chain means that if a movement goes from A to B then there is no force on earth that will be able to make it go from B to A. The acrostic varies in alphabetic form (see Chapter 2), and stages of grief are not in a sequential sequence of 1-5. Indeed, there is serious doubt that grief has arrived at the stage of acceptance in Lamentations 5. See 1.5 for other conceptual models.

[237] See Lee (2010) and Mandolfo (2008) for their explanation of the common ground and universality of suffering as expressed in poetry.

[238] Cries of grief also occur in extra-biblical works, such as 'Lamentations over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur'. See also 3.3.1.

… me … me', or 'Remember, … look … see' warn that disaster has taken place, intimating that further grief cries are to follow. Such exclamations as 'Alas!' and 'Alone' become 'key words' and as such, not only frame, but also add emotional impact to the turmoil of the Spanish Civil War in the reading of W.H. Auden's poem *Spain 1937*:

> We are left **alone** with our day, and the time is short and
> History to the defeated
> May say **Alas** but cannot help or pardon.[239]

So the cry 'Alas' and the feelings of being 'alone' are not limited to a particular text or context, but are human feelings of grief, which are experienced intertextually and cross-culturally, especially in situations of war and natural disasters, where there is not only individual loss, but also communal or national devastation. 'Understanding is asking the questions and finding the answers that the text insists on', so Culler (in Eco et al. 1992:114)[240] challenges readers to ask questions that have been hidden in the text and repressed through grief. Maybe the only answer is to cry, gasp, weep, sigh and groan in various laments, mantras and prayers of survival.

Other lament expressions, details of which are outside the scope of this thesis, such as lament in music and liturgy, could bring further insights. However, a key point of discussion throughout this thesis is that the ancient lamenter and the contemporary person in grief both have difficulty in being heard. This resonates with extracts from experiences, which Fant (2008:215-217) records in his lament over the natural disaster of 2005 in New Orleans:

Line 1 How like a widow sits the city once so beautiful!
She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks,
because there is none to comfort her.
She stretched forth her hands, but none came to her;
they heard she was groaning, but none came unto her. …

[239] In this poem Auden emphasises present turmoil in the setting of Spain's Civil War and the choice 'To build the Just City?' or accept 'the romantic death'. The bold emphasis is mine.
[240] Eco continues that the text demands that we ask questions, such as: 'So what happened?' 'Why?' etc. but over-interpretation, what he calls *overstanding*, consists of pursuing questions that the text does not pose to its model reader.

Line 13 When she cried aloud, none came;
smooth words promised much,
but they were empty rhetoric, …

Line 23 Weep, weep for the great city!
Orators of platitudes, politicians of promises,
it is you who betrayed her!
You took from her safety;
you neglected her when she reached out to you.[241]

Fant has witnessed the storm destruction in New Orleans and has heard the cry of the devastated widow-city. He uses the richness, intensity and liveliness of poetic devices to express strong feelings of abandonment, isolation, death and allocation of blame in a setting of natural disaster, inspired by the ancient lyrics and simultaneously reading his text back into the *'almānāh* of Lamentations 1 (Chapter 4).

The imagery of the *baṯ-ṣiyyôn* of Lamentations 2 (Chapter 5), who was beautiful, but now shamed and razed to the ground, is reflected in the experience of the lovely Greek Island of Khíos, which also was stripped of its loveliness, when struck by the shattering event of an earthquake in 1881:

O Khíos, once so highly praised,
favoured by all the world.
How are you now so deathly pale,
consumed by bitter grief
How withered the splendid blossom there;
where now is your everlasting loveliness? (in Nancy Lee 2008:37)[242]

Death and disaster open up a gap in a seemingly endless space of destruction and barrenness, but it is in this 'lacuna' that new discoveries are made, as nature, communities and buildings mourn together.

[241] Fant has written with a superscript 'I am from Louisiana. In the last days, grief and outrage have held a contest inside me. So I am writing this because I have to'.
[242] Lee notes how grief is linked to the imagery of withered blossom. In Lam. 2:8 mourning is also linked to the natural idea of wilting or withering vegetation, as the Hebrew wall and rampart (עבל) languish (עמל) together.

Yet another metaphorical image leads us to the prayer from the pen of an AIDS sufferer of South Africa, who joins with Job and the *geber* in the *Begründung* of Lamentations 3 (Chapter 6), as he bargains with God in the conflicts of fighting against suffering, death, guilt and disease:

> My God why did you give me such a heavy burden?
> I thought I was doing well obeying your laws.
> I beg you forgive me if I have sinned against you.
> Curse this incurable disease in my body.
> If this is the result of my sins, please guide me in your ways;
> show me the way I should go.
> I thank you loving Father and Good Shepherd. AMEN. (in Gerald West 2008:204)[243]

The Biblical threads of confession and restoration, deed and consequence, act and retribution form part of the South African AIDS sufferer's questions and plea to God for healing, justice, guidance and renewal of relationships in his suffering and loss of health.

The imagery of stones and wild animals, a poignant reminder of a past heritage strewn in the streets and the metaphorically depressive imagery of *bənê ṣiyyôn/ baṯ-ʿammî* of Lamentations 4 (Chapter 7), reflect the pulsing emotions and the colour-draining wilderness setting of war in Croatia in 1991:

> and I would like to fax them the pictures
> of crosses and tombstones
> that the death-hungry bandit monsters
> vomit upon us from the stolen sky …
> of the werewolves in their tanks
> rolling over the sacred soil of croatia
> and the colours of frescoes and mosaics of fruit
> strewn over concrete of the market's remnants … (Arapovic 2008:169)

This cross-cultural resonance of Lamentations with lament poetry over the centuries from the past to the present is an exercise in staying with the text and the tensions between the ordered form of lament and the disordered expression of grief. Through

[243] The ordering of the lines is mine.

the changeableness and multivalency of the imagery, now a widow, now a shamed and languishing city, now a warrior, now a wild animal, now a community in disgrace, a cross-cultural coping strategy is developed. There is no sudden reprieve or *deus ex machina*. In extreme conditions, individuals have lost their vision for the 'here and now' of social celebration and political battles, but they survive, so that although the mourning rituals and the expression of lament from past eras cannot simply be reproduced in our modern world. Nevertheless, as Moberly (1997:874) suggests we can benefit from 'reflection on the communal, traditional and unhurried practices of ancient Israel (and its neighbours)'. Archie Lee (2008:130), in his cross-textual reading of 'The Lament for the South' with the Lamentations lyrics, notes the common theme of survival:

> So looking back I wrote this song
> That it might serve as a record;
> Not without words of fear and suffering,
> It is still, at the core, a lament.
> The sun is setting; my road is far away;
> How long have I left in this world?[244]

Lament and grief is an interactive process, which, perhaps, can only really be understood in retrospect. Archie Lee, like the metaphorical city in Lamentations and the person or community in grief, looks back and remembers, still wondering when it will all end.

9.3 Interpretative Choices

If the model reader takes time to sit with the vulnerable and tearful *'almānāh* in the Lamentations lyrics, then questions raised about the loneliness and isolation of grief will still be addressed today. If the helix model has provided space to hear the moaning and groaning of the *bat̲-ṣiyyôn* as she and others like her blame others in a build-up of anger and shame, then this reading of Lamentations has been worthwhile. If the reader hears the voice of the suffering *geb̲er*, bargaining for self and for others over and above the voice of tradition, then there is hope for a new worldview both on the 'Textual Strand' and on the 'Psychological Strand'. Cross-culturally, a rehearsal

[244] Lee explains that this is a traditional form of Chinese lament dating from the 4th century BCE and notes that in national calamities the Chinese do not develop complaint against God.

of the *geb̲er*'s sorrows, rather than a triumphal celebration of successes, will become a shared experience of grief with others. The act/retribution guidelines that would restrict success to fulfilling the mechanical motivation of the acrostic and limit recovery to following the magical medium of the psychological remedies, will be overcome by the creativity of plea-bargaining. However, the *bənê ṣiyyôn*/*baṯ-ʿammî* have no voice to overflow the margins of their restricted world. Instead, at their borders, there is a battle of life and death imaged by a spectrum of colour, which is both vivid and textually violent, but pale and psychologically dead. In such horrific situations of reversal, even for the *ḥerpāṯ̲ēnû* (Lam. 5:1), there is a remembrance of how things were and during the configuration of how things are, there is a feeling of wanting to move forward towards restoration. Clock time is not all-important; it is recovery time that leads on from the final lyric.

In the words of Eco (1992:140): 'I am not trying to impose a conclusion … because there are many possible conclusions … and the task of a creative text is to display the contradictory plurality of its conclusions, setting the readers free to choose'. The repetitive round and round of poetic devices and grief phases is still recurring, as one after another emerges. This is by no means the end; it is really only the beginning of working towards a cross-cultural hermeneutic.

Sources for Figures

Breast Plate with Precious Stones. (no date). Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: http://www.courses.cit.cornell.edu/high_priest

Delacroix, Eugène. (1830). *La Liberté Guidant le Peuple*. Retrieved 27th April 2009 from: http://www.cartelen.louvre.fr

Basis for Double-stranded helix model. Retrieved 13th February 2007 from: http://www.istockphoto.com

Egyptian Jackal-headed god *Anubis*. Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anubis_standing

High Priest with Breast Plate. (no date). Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: http://www.courses.cit.cornell.edu/high_priest

Redgrave, Richard. (1844). *The Governess*. Retrieved 27th April 2009 from: http://www.vam.ac.uk/images/image15501

[Stones Strewn in the Street]. *What was once Kabul.* Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: http://www.ephonline.org.members/2003/111-90/rubble

Sources for Bible Versions and Sacred Texts

The Bhagavad-Gita. (1994). (Tr. W.J. Johnson). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The Koran. (1998). (Tr. A. J. Arberry). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Amplified Bible. (1987). (Lockman Foundation). Retrieved 15th May 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

La Bible de Jérusalem (1973). (Les Editions du Cerf). Retrieved 23rd May 2006 from: http://www.unboundbible.org

La Bible du Semeur. (1999). (International Bible Society). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

Conferenza Episcopale Italiana. (1995). Gospel Communications International). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

Contemporary English Version. (1995). (American Bible Society). Retrieved 15th March 2005 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

Chouraqui Version. (no date). Retrieved 8th February 2006 from: http://nachouraqui.tripod.com

Douay-Rheims. (1899). (American Edn.). Retrieved 4th May 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

Elberfelder. (2006). (Gospel Communications International). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

Good News Bible. (1976). London: Bible Society.

Haitian Créole Version. (1995). (Gospel Communications International). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

King James Version. (2005). (Gospel Communications International). Retrieved 26th May 2005 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

Knox Version. (1957). (Tr. Ronald A. Knox). London: Burns and Oates, Macmillan.

Latin Vulgate. (405). Retrieved 12th May 2006 from: http://www.blueletterbible.org

La Nuova Diodati. (1991). (La Buona Novella scrl). Retrieved 12th May 2006 from: http://www.blueletterbible.org

Louis Segond. (no date). London: Trinitarian Bible Society.

Luther Bibel. (1545). Retrieved 16th March 2005 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

The Message. (2002). (Tr. Eugene Peterson). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com

New American Standard Version. (1995). (Lockman Foundation). Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
New Century Version. (2005). (Thomas Nelson). Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
New International Reader's Version (1998). Retrieved 29th October 2007 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
New International Version Study Bible. (1985). Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers.
New Living Translation. (2004). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha. (1995). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Nueva Versión Internacional. (1999). (International Bible Society). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
Revised Standard Version. (1995). (Gospel Communications International). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
Reina-Valera. (1995). (Gospel Communications International). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
Reina-Valera Antigua. (1602). Retrieved 12th February 2006 from: http://www.biblegateway.com
Septuaginta. (1926). (ed. A. Rahlfs) Stuttgaart: Privilegierte Wiirtembergische Bibelanstalt.
Tanakh. (1985). Philadelphia, Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrams, M.H. (2005). *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. USA: Thomason Wadworth.

Ackroyd, P. R. (1972). *Exile and Restoration*; *A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.* London: SCM Press.

_____. (1970). *Israel under Babylon and Persia.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ackroyd, P. R., and Lindars, B. (1968). *Words and Meanings*: *Essays Presented to David Winton Thomas.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Albertz, R. (2003). *Israel in Exile*: *The History and Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E.* (tr. by D. Green). Atlanta: SBL.

Albrektson, B. (1963). *Studies in the Text and Theology of the Book of Lamentations*. Lund: CWK Gleerup.

Alexander, M. (tr.). (2003). *Beowulf*: *A verse Translation*. London: Penguin Group.

Alter, R. (1990). *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

Alter, R., and Kermode, F. (eds.). (1989). *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. London: Fontana.

Anderson, B. W. (1983). *Out of the Depths*: *ThePsalms Speak for us Today*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Anderson, G. A. (1991). *A Time to Mourn, A Time to Dance*: *The Expression of Grief and Joy in Israelite Religion*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Arapovic, B. (2008). 'Selections between Despair and Lamentation'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 163-176). Atlanta: SBL.

Archer, J. (1999). *The Nature of Grief*: *The Evolution and Psychology of Reactions to Loss.* London: Routledge.

Askew, E. (1992). *Breaking the Rules*. Middx.: The Leprosy Mission International.

Assis, E. (2005). *The Unity of Lamentations*. Paper delivered at The Society for Old Testament Studies Conference in Edinburgh July 2005.

_____. (2007). 'The Alphabetic Acrostic in the Book of Lamentations'. *CBQ*, 69(4), 710-724.

Auden, W.H. (1949). 'In Memory of W.B. Yeats'. In S. Rodman (ed.), *One Hundred Modern Poems* (p. 121). New York: The New American Library Inc.

Avis, P. (1999). *God and the Creative Imagination*:*Metaphor, Symbol and Myth in Religion and Theology*. London: Routledge.

Backer, B.A., Hannon, N. and Russell, N.A. (1982). *Death and Dying*: *Individuals and Institutions*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Bail, U. (2003). 'Spelling out No-Where. Lamentations as a Textual Space for Survival'. *Lection difficilior, European Electronic Journal for Feminist Studes*. Retrieved 17th October 2010 from: http://www.lewctio.unibe.che/03_1/bail.htm

Bailey, W.A. (2008). 'The Lament Traditions of Enslaved African American Women and the Lament Traditions of the Hebrew Bible'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts*, (pp.151-162). Atlanta: SBL.

Balantine, S.E. (1993). *Prayer in the Hebrew Bible*: *The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Ballard, P., and Holmes, S.R. (2005). *The Bible in Pastoral Practice*: *Readings in the Place and Function of Scripture in the Church.* London: DLT.

Bannet, E. T. (1989). *Structuralism and the Logic of Dissent*: *Barthes, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan.* London: MacMillan Press Ltd.
Bar-Efrat, S. (1989). *Narrative Art in the Bible.* Sheffield: Almond Press.
Barbour, I. G. (1974). *Myths Models and Paradigms*. London: SCM Press.
Barnhart, R.K. (ed.). (1988). *Chambers Dictionary of Etymology*. Edinburgh: Harrap Publishers Ltd.
Barthes, R. (1957). *Mythologies*. Paris: Seuil.
_____. (1977). *Image, Music, Text*. Cambridge Ma.: Fontana Press.
_____. (1989). *The Rustle of Language*. California: University of California Press.
_____. (1993). *Mythologies*. London: Vintage.
_____. (2002). *Oeuvres complètes I*: *Livres, Textes, Entretiens 192-1961*. Paris: Seuil.
Baukham, R. (2001). 'Revelation'. In J. Barton, and J. Muddiman (eds.), *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (pp. 1287-1306). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
_____. (2002). *Gospel Women*: *Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Erdmans.
Baumgartner, W. (1988). *Jeremiah's Poems of Lament* (tr. D.E. Orton). Sheffield: Almond Press.
Beardsley, M. (1958). *Aesthetics*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.
Bendor, S. (2000). *The Social Structure of Ancient Israel*. Jerusalem: Simor Ltd.
Benjamin, L.T. (Jr.). (2007). *A Brief History of Modern Psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Benjamin, W. (1999). *Illuminations*. London: Pimlico.
Bennett, D. W. (1993). *Metaphors of Ministry: Biblical Images for Leaders and Followers*. Carlisle: Paternoster Press.
Benoliel, J. (1970). 'Talking to Patients about Death'. *Nursing Forum*, 9(3), 254-268.
Benveniste, E. (1977). The Correlation of Tense in the French Verb. In (tr. M.E. Meek). *Problems in General Linguistics* (pp.163-179). Miami: University of Miami Press.
Bergant, D. (2002). 'The Challenge of Hermeneutics: Lamentations 1:11: A Test Case'. *CBQ*, 64(1), 1-16.
Berger, P.L. (1969). *The Sacred Canopy. Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. New York: Anchor Books.
Bergsträsser, G. (1983). *Introduction to the Semitic Languages* (tr. and sup. P.T. Daniels). Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
Berlin, A. (2008). 'On Writing a Commentary on Lamentations'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 3-11). Atlanta: SBL.
Bevans, S. B. (2002). *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis.
Beyerlin, W. (ed.). (1978). *Near Eastern Religious Texts relating to the Old Testament*. London: SCM Press.
Black, E. (1978). *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method.* Madison: University of Winsconsin Press.
Black, M. (1962). *Models and Metaphors*. New York: Ithaca, Cornell University Press.
Boadt, L. (1984). *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction.* New Jersey: Paulist Press.

Boase, E. (2006). *The Fulfilment of Doom*? *The dialogical Interaction between the Book of Lamentations and the Pre-Exilic/Early Exilic Prophetic Literature*. London, New York: T&T. Clark.
Bonhoeffer, D. (1995). *Christians and Pagans* (eds. Kelly and Burton Nelson). San Franciso: Harper Collins.
Botterweck, G. J. and Ringgren, H. (eds.). (1974). *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Vol. I.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Bowlby, J. (1961). 'Process of Mourning'. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 42, 317-40.
_____. (1980). *Attachment and Loss*: *Volume 3 Loss Sadness and Depression*. London: Penguin.
Bowman, C.A. (2000). *Using Literature to Help Troubled Teenagers Cope with Health Issues*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
Bremmer, J., and van den Bosch, L. (1999). 'Widow'. In S. Young (ed. in chief), *Encyclopaedia of Women and World Religion* (pp. 1029-1030). USA: Macmillan Reference.
Brenner, A., and van Djik-Hemmes, F. (1993). *On Gendering Texts*: *Female and Male Voices in the Hebrew Bible*. Leiden: Brill.
Brett, P. (1995). *Tudor Church Music*: *Thomas Tallis, The Lamentations of Jeremiah*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Britt, B. (2003). 'Unexpected Attachments: A Literary Approach to the Term *hesed* in the Hebrew Bible'. *JSOT*, 27(3), 289-307.
Brown, F., Driver, S., and Briggs, C. (2003). *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon.* Massachusetts: Hendrickson.
Broyles, C.C. (1989). *The Conflict of Faith and Experience in the Psalms*: *A Form-Critical and Theological Study*. Sheffield: JSOT Press.
Brueggemann, W. (1977). 'The Formfulness of Grief'. *Interpretation* 31, 263-275.
_____. (1980). 'Psalms and the Life of Faith: A suggested Typology of Function'. *JSOT*, 17, 3-32.
_____. (1984). *The Message of the Psalms*: *A Theological Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg.
_____. (1985). 'Theodicy in a Social Dimension'. *JSOT*, 33, 3-25.
_____. (1986). *Hopeful Imagination*: *Prophetic Voices in Exile.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
_____. (1986). 'The Costly Loss of Lament'. *JSOT*, 36, 57-71.
_____. (1995). *The Psalms and the Life of Faith*. (P.D. Miller ed.). Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
_____. (1997). *Theology of the Old Testament, Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy,* Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
_____. (2006). *Like Fire in the Bones*: *Listening for the Prophetic Word in Jeremiah*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
_____. (2009). *An Unsettling God*: *The Heart of the Hebrew Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Buber, M., and Rosenzweig, F. (1994). *Scripture and Translation*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
Budick, S., and Iser, W. (eds.). (1989). *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Busby, M. (ed.). (1992). *Daughters of Africa*: *An International Anthology of Words And Writings by Women of African Descent from the Ancient Egyptian to the Present*. London: Jonathan Cape.
Caird, G.B. (1988). *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*. London: Duckworth.
Camp, C. (1985). *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*. (D.M. Gunn ed.). Sheffield: Almond, JSOT Press.
_____. (2000). *Wise, Strange and Holy*: *The Strange Woman and the Making of the Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press
Campbell, A.V. (1986). *Rediscovering Pastoral Care* (2nd ed.). London: DLT.
Cardwell, M. (2000). *The Complete A-Z Psychology Handbook* (2nd ed.). London: Hodder and Stoughton.
Carroll, R. P. (1979). *When Prophecy Failed*: *Cognitive Dissonance in the Prophetic Traditions of the Old Testament*. New York: Seabury.
_____. (1998). Lower Case Bibles: Commodity Culture and the Bible. In J.C. Exum, and S.D. Moore (eds.), *Biblical Studies*/*Cultural Studies*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Caygill, H. (1998). *Walter Benjamin*: *The Colour of Experience*. London: Routledge.
Ceresko, A.R. (1990). 'The Sage in the Psalms'. In J.G. Gammie, and R.G. Perdue (eds.), *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
Chalcraft, D. J. (1997). *Social-Scientific Old Testament Criticism*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Change: Centre for Health and Gender Equity (2008). *Botswana*: *Stigma and Women Living with HIV/AIDS*. Retrieved 13th January 2011 from: http://www.genderhealth.org/the_issues/hiv_aids_and_other_stis/botswana_stigma
Charmé, S. (2005). 'The Political Transformation of Gender Traditions at the Western Wall in Jerusalem'. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 21(1), 5-34.
Chernoff, J.M. (1979). *African Rhythm and African Sensibility - Aesthetics and Social Action in African Musical Idioms*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Childs, B.S. (1979). *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
Chisholm, T. (1923). *Great is Thy Faithfulness*. Carol Stream: Hope Publishing Co.
Christianson, E. S. (1998). *A Time to Tell*: *Narrative Strategies in Ecclesiastes.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
_____. (2007). *Ecclesiastes through the Centuries*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Clark, A. (2004). 'Working with Grieving Adults', *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 10, pp. 164-170.
Clark, S.H. (1990). *Paul Ricoeur*. London: Routledge.
Clarke, S. (2002). 'Viewing the Bible through the Eyes and Ears of Subalterns in India'. *BIJCA*, 10(3), 245-266.
Clinebell, H.J. (1984). *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counselling*: *Resources for The Ministry of Healing and Growth*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
Clines, D. J.A. (1993-2001). *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew Vols. I-V.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Clines, D. J.A. (2002). *He-Prophets*: *Masculinity as a Problem for Hebrew Prophets and their Interpreters*, Paper read at Boston: SBL Annual Meeting and revised version posted on the web 4.12.2002. *retrieved from www.shef.ac.uk*

Clines, D.J.A. (2009). *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Sheffield: Phoenix Press.
Cone, J. (1972). *Slavery Chain*. Retrieved 14th January 2011from: http://www.negrospirituals.com/news-song/slavery_chain.htm
Cook, J.A. (1998). 'Dad's double binds, rethinking father's bereavement from a man's studies perspective'. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 17(3), 285-308.
Cragg, K. (1991). *Readings in the Qur'an*. London: Collins Religious Publishing.
Crawford, M.E. (1989). 'Subsistence Crises and Famines in Ireland: A Nutritionist's View'. In M.E. Crawford (ed.), *The Irish Experience* (pp. 198-219). Edinburgh: J. Donald.
Crenshaw, J.L. (1981). *Old Testament Wisdom*: *An Introduction*. Atlanta: John Knox Press.
_____. (2001). 'Job'. In J. Barton, and J. Muddiman (eds.), *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (pp.331-355). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Culler, J. (1997). *Literary Theory*: *A very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Currer, C. (2001). *Responding to Grief*: *Dying, Bereavement and Social Care*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Davies, D., and Neal, C. (eds.). (1996). *Pink Therapy: A Guide for Counsellors and Therapists Working with Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual Clients*. Buckingham, Bristol, PA: Open University Press.
Davies, G.I. (1977). 'The Uses of *r'* Qal and the Meaning of Jonah IV I'. *Vetus Testamentum*, 27, 105-111.
Davis, E. F. (1992). 'Exploding the Limits: Form and Function in Psalm 22', *JSOT*, 53, 93-105.
Davis, E. F., and Hays, R. B. (eds.). (2003). *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Day, P. L. (1989). *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
De Lange, N. (2000). *An Introduction to Judaism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
De Vries, S.J. (1996). 'The Acrostic of Nahum in Jerusalem Liturgy'. *Vetus Testamentum*, 16(4), 476-481.
Dentith, S. (1995). *Bakhtinian Thought*: *An Introductory Reader*. London: Routledge.
Derrida, J (1981). *Dissemination* (tr. B. Johnson). Chicago: University of Chicago.
Des Pres, T. (1976). *The Survivor*: *An anatomy of Life in Death Camps*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Dewey, J. (1946). 'Peirce's Theory of Linguistic Signs, Thought, and Meaning'. *Journal of Philosophy*, 43, 91.
Dobbs-Allsopp, F.W. (1997). 'Tragedy, Tradition and Theology in the Book of Lamentations', *JSOT*, 74, 29-60.
_____. (2002). *Lamentations*: *Interpretation*: *A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Louisville: John Knox Press
Driver, S.R. (1920). *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (9th ed.). Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
Dumoulin, H. (1963). *A History of Zen Buddhism*. London: Faber and Faber.
Dyrness, W. (1979). *Themes in Old Testament Theology*. Exeter: Paternoster Press.
Eaton, J. (1979). *Festal Drama in Deutero-Isaiah*. Southampton: The Camelot Press.

Eco, U. (1984). *The Role of the Reader*: *Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts.* Bloomington: Indiana Press.
_____. (2004). *Mouse or Rat*: *Translation as Negotiation*. London: Pheoenix/Orion.
Eco, U., Rorty, R., Culler, J., and Brooke-Rose, C. (1992). *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (ed. S. Collini). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Eliot, T.S. (1973). *The Waste Land and Other Poems*. London: Faber and Faber.
Elfick, H., and Head, D. (2004). *Attending to the Fact - Staying with The Dying* (ed. C. Fuller). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
Emerson, G. I. (1989). 'Women in Ancient Israel'. In R.E. Clements (ed.), *The World of Ancient Israel*: *Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives* (pp.371-394). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Erikson, E. H. (1994). *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York, London: Norton.
Ernst, M. (1948). *Beyond Painting*. New York: Wittenborn Schultz.
Esposito, J. L. (1999). *The Islamic Threat*: *Myth or Reality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Exum, J. C. (1992). *Tragedy and Biblical Narrative*: *Arrows of the Almighty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
_____. (1993). *Fragmented Women*: *Feminist (Sub)versions of Biblical Narratives*. Sheffield: JSOT Press.
Exum, J. C., and Clines, D J.A. (1993). *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Fackenheim, E.L. (1982). *To Mend the World*. New York: Schocken.
Fant, C. (2008). 'A Lament for New Orleans'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 215-217). Atlanta: SBL.
Feltham, C., and Horton. I. (eds.). (2006). *The Sage Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Sage Publications.
Ferris, P.W. (1992). *The Genre of Communal Lament in the Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
Fish, S. (1980). *Is There a Text in This Class*? *The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge: Havard University Press.
Fishbane, M. (1998). *Biblical Text and Texture*: *A Literary Reading of Selected Texts*. Oxford: One World.
Floyd, M.H. (1994). 'The Chimerical Acrostic of Nahum 1:2-10'. *JBL*, 113(3), 421-437.
Follis, E.R. (ed.). (1987). *Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Fontanier, Pierre. (1968). *Les Figures du Discours*. Paris: Flammarion.
Foucault, M. (1987). *Death and the Labyrinth*: *The World of Raymond Roussel* (tr. C. Ruas). London: Athlone Press.
Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition. (1994). *Kopan Monastery Prayers and Practices* (2nd ed.). Kathmandu: Kopan Monastery.
France, P. (ed.). (2000). *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Francis, L. J. (2005). 'Faith and Psychology: Integration and Application'. *Expository Times*, 117(2), 58-63.

Freedman, D.N. (1986). 'Acrostic Poems in the Hebrew Bible: Alphabetic and Otherwise'. *CBQ*, 48(3), 408-431.
_____. (ed.). (2000). *Eerdman's Dictionary of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Freedman H., and Simon M. (eds.). (1961). *The Midrash VII Deuteronomy – Lamentations, Midrash Rabbah*. London: Soncino Press.
Fretheim, T. E. (2004). 'I was only a little angry: Divine Violence in the Prophets'. *Interpretation*: *A Journal of Bible and Theology*, 58(4), 365-375.
Freud, S. (1938). *Totem and Taboo*. London: Penguin.
_____. (1985a). *The Essentials of Psychoanalysis*: *The Definitive Collection of Sigmund Freud's Writings* (tr. J. Strachey). London: Penguin Books.
_____. (1985b). *The Origins of Religion*. London: Penguin Books.
Friebel, K. G. (1999). *Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts*: *Rhetorical Non-verbal Communication*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Gadamer, H-G. (1988). *Truth and Method* (2nd edn.). London: Sheed and Ward.
Gammie, J.G., and Perdue, R.G. (eds.). (1990). *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
Genette, G. (1980). *Narrative Discourse*: *An Essay in Method.* New York: Cornell University Press.
_____. (1982). *Figures of Literary Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Gerstenberger, E.S. (2001). *Psalms, Part 2, and Lamentations*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Gibson, J.C.L. (1998). *Language and Imagery in the Old Testament.* London: SPCK.
Gill, S. (ed.). (1984). *William Wordsworth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Gillingham, S.E. (1994). *The Poems and Psalms of the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
_____. (1998). *One Bible Many Voices*: *Different Approaches to Biblical Studies.* London: SPCK.
Gillmayr-Bucher, S. (2004). 'Body Images in the Psalms'. *JSOT*, 28(3), 301-326.
Glaser, B., and Strauss, A. (1968). *A Time for Dying*. Chicago: Aldine.
Goldingay, J. (1981). 'The Dynamic Cycle of Praise and Prayer in the Psalms'. *JSOT*, 20, 85-90.
_____. (1995). *Models for Interpretation of Scripture.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Goodman, M. (ed.). (2002). *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Gordis, R. (1968). *Koheleth - The Man and his World*: *A Study of Ecclesiastes* (3rd edn.). New York: Schoken.
Gordon, R.K. (sel. and tr.). (1926). *Anglo Saxon Poetry*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd.
Gottwald, N. K. (1954). *Studies in the Book of Lamentations*. London: SCM Press.
_____. (1987). *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
_____. (1988). 'Lamentations'. In J.L. Mays (gen. ed.), *Harpers Bible Commentary* (pp. 646-651). San Francisco: Harper.
Gottwald, N. K., and Horsley, R. A. (eds.). (1993). *The Bible and Liberation*: *Political and Social Hermeneutics* (revised edn.). New York: Orbis.
Gous, I.G.P. (1992). 'A Survey of Research on the Book of Lamentations'. *JOTSSA*, 5(2), 184-205.

Gowan, D. E. (1986). *Eschatology in the Old Testament*. London, New York: T&T Clark.
Graham, W.T. (1980). *The Lament for the South -Yu Hsin's Ai Chiang-nan Fu*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Green, J., and Green, M. (1992). *Dealing with Death*: *Practices and Procedures*. London: Chapman and Hall.
Green, L. (1990). *Let's Do Theology*: *A Pastoral Cycle Resource Book*. London: Mowbray.
Grelot, P. (2006). *The Language of Symbolism: Biblical Theology, Semantics and Exegesis* (tr. C. R. Smith). Massachusets: Hendrickson Publishers.
Gruber, M.I. (1983). 'The Motherhood of God in Second Isaiah'. *Revue Biblique*, 90, 351-59.
Guest, D. (1999). 'Hiding Behind the Naked Women in Lamentations: A Recriminative Response'. *BIJCA*, 7(4), 413-448.
_____. (2006). 'Lamentations'. In D. Guest (ed.), *The Queer Bible Commentary*, (pp. 394-411). London: SCM Press.
Gunn, D.M., and Fewell, D.N. (1993). *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Gyatso, G. K. (1982). *Clear Light of Bliss*. London: Tharpa Publications.
Hahn, L.E. (1995). *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*. Chicago: Library of Living Philosophers.
Handel, J. (1981). 'Messiah in Vocal Score and Sacred Oratorio'. In Watkin Shaw (ed.), Novello and Co. Handel edn., p. 123.
Hardy, D.W., and Ford, D. (1984). *Jubilate*: *Theology in Praise*. London: DLT.
Harrison, R.K. (1973). *Jeremiah and Lamentations*: *An Introduction and Commentary*. London: Tyndale.
Harvey, J. H. (2000). *Give Sorrow Words*: *Perspective on Loss and Trauma*. Philadelphia, PA; Hove: Brunner/Mazel.
_____. (2002). *Perspectives on Loss and Trauma*: *Assault on the Self*. London: Sage Publications.
Harvey, P. (1990). *An Introduction to Buddhism*: *Teachings History and Practices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hauerwas, S. (1990). *Naming the Silences*: *God Medicine and the Problem of Suffering*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans .
Heath, M. (1996). *Aristotle*: *Poetics*. London: Penguin Books.
Henle, Paul. (1958). 'Metaphor'. In Paul Henle (ed.), *Language, Thought, and Culture*, Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
Hepner, G. (2001). 'Verbal Resonance in the Bible and Intertextuality'. *JSOT*, 96, 3-27.
Hess, B. (2005). *Abstract Impressionism*. Los Angeles: Taschen.
Hiebert, P.S. (1993). 'Widows'. In D.M.Metzger, and M.D. Coogan (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (pp. 796-798). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Hilliers, D.R. (1982). *The Anchor Bible*: *Lamentations*: *A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday.
_____. (1992). *Lamentations* (2nd ed.). New York: Doubleday.
Hirsch, E.D. Jr., Kett, J.F., and Trefil, J. (2002). *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* (3rd edn.). Boston: Houghton Miflin.

Holst-Warhaft, G. (1999). 'Mourning and Death Rites'. In S.Young (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Women and World Religion* (pp. 682-685). New York: Macmillan Reference.
Holzman, M. (1997). *The Language of Children*: *Evolution and Development of Secondary Consciousness and Language* (2nd Edn.). Oxford: Blackwell.
House, P.R. (ed.). (1992). *Beyond Form Criticism*: *Essays in Old Testament Criticism*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
Huddlestun, J.R. (2002). 'Divestiture, Deception and Demotion: The Garment Motif in Genesis 37-39'. *JSOT*, 26(4), 47-62.
Hull, J. M. (1990). *Touching the Rock*: *An Experience of Blindness*. London: SPCK.
Hunter, J. (1992). 'How can we Lament when we are Glad? A Comment on Genre in Poetic Texts'. *JOTSSA*, 5(2), 175-183.
Hunter, R. J. (1990). *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
Hurowitz, V. (1992). *I have Built you an House*: *Temple Building in the Bible in Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Isherwood, L. (2005). 'Incarnation in Times of Terror: Christian Theology and the Challenge of September 11th'. *Feminist Theology*, 14(1), 69-81.
Jakobson, R. (K. Pomorska, and S. Rudy eds.). (1987). *Language in Literature*. Cambridge: Belknap Press/Harvard University.
James, W. (1890). *Principles of Psychology Vol I*. New York: Henry Holland and Co.
_____. (1928). *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (2nd edn.) London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd.
Jones, G.H. (1989). 'The Concept of Holy War'. In R.E. Clements (ed.), *The World of Ancient Israel* (p. 299). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Joyce, P. (1989). *Divine Initiative and Human Response in Ezekiel*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
_____. (1993). 'Lamentations and the Grief Process: A Psychological Reading', *BI*, 1(3), 304-320.
_____. (2001). 'Lamentations'. In J. Barton and J. Muddiman (eds.), *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (pp. 528-533). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Juschka, D. M. (ed.). (2001). *Feminism in the Study of Religion*: *A Reader*. London, New York: Continuum.
Kaiser, B.B. (1987). 'Poet as "Female Impersonator": The Image of Daughter Zion as Speaker in Biblical Poems of Suffering'. *Journal of Religion*, 67(2), 164-182.
Karpan Monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal. (1994). *Prayers and Practices*. Kathmandu: Modern Printing Press.
Kartomi, M.J. (1984). 'Delineation of Lullaby Style in Three Areas of Aboriginal Australia'. In J.C. Kassler and J. Stubington (eds.), *Problems and Solutions - Occasional Essays in Musicology presented to Alice M. Moyle.* Sydney: Hale and Ironmonger.
Kastenbaum, R.J. (1977). *Death, Society, and Human Experience*. St Louis: C.V. Mosby.
Katzner, K. (2002). *The Languages of the World* (3rd edn.). London: Routledge.
Keach, B. (1972). *Preaching from the Types and Metaphors of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications.

Keel, O. (1978). *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*: *Ancient Near-Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms.* London: SPCK.
Kelly, G.B., and Burton N. F. (eds.). (1995). *A Testament to Freedom*: *The Essential Writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. New York: Harper Collins.
Ker, W.P. (ed.). (1990). *Essays of John Dryden*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Kille, D.A. (2001). *Psychological Biblical Criticism*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Killian, L.M. (1958). 'The Significance of Multi-group Membership in Disaster'. In E.E. Maccoby, T.M. Newcomb, and E.L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (3rd ed.), (pp. 459-464). London: Methuen.
King, R., Connell, J., and White, P. (eds.). (1995). *Writing across Worlds*: *Literature and Migration*. London: Routledge.
Klass, D., Silverman, P.R., and Nickman, S.L. (1996). *Continuing Bonds*: *New Understandings of Grief*. Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis.
Knapp, M. L. (1978). *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
Knibb, M. A. (1989). 'Life and Death in the Old Testament'. In R.E. Clements (ed.), *The Worlds of Ancient Israel*: *Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives*, (pp. 39-415) (2nd edn.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Kristeva, J. (1986). *The Kristeva Reader* (ed. Toril Moi). Oxford: Blackwell.
Kroll, U. (2001). *The Anatomy of Survival*: *Steps on a Personal Journey Towards Healing*. London, New York: Continuum.
Kübler-Ross E. (1986). *Death*: *The Final Stage of Growth*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
_____. (1989). *On Death and Dying*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.
Kügel, J. L. (1981). *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*: *Parallelism and its History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
Kuschel, K.-J. (1999). *The Poet as Mirror*: *Human Nature, God and Jesus in Twentieth Century Literature* (tr. J. Bowden). London: SCM Press.
Kusher, H.S. (1982). *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. London: Pan Books.
Laato, A., and Moor, J.C. (eds.). (2004). 'Theodicy in the World of the Bible'. *Expository Times*, 115(12), 404-409.
Laffy, A.L. (1990). *Wives Harlots and Concubines: The Old Testament in Feminist Perspective*. London: SPCK.
Lago, C., and Smith, B. (eds.). (2003). *Anti-discriminatory Counselling Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
Lakoff, G., and Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Lanahan, W.J. (1974). 'The Speaking Voice in the Book of Lamentations'. *JBL* 93(1), 41-49.
Landy, F. (1987). 'Lamentations'. In R. Alter, and F. Kermode (Eds.), *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (pp. 329-334). London: Collins.
_____. (2001). *Beauty and the Enigma and Other Essays on the Hebrew Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Langer, L. (1982). *Versions of Survival*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Lanner, L. (1999). 'Cannibal Mothers and Me: A Mother's Reading of 2 Kings 6.24-7.20'. *JSOT*, 85, 107-116.
_____. (2006). *'Who Will Lament Her?' The Feminine and the Fantastic in the book of Nahum*. London, New York: T&T Clark.

Lee, Archie C.C. (2004). 'Lamentations'. In D. Patte, (gen. ed.), *Global Bible Commentary* (pp. 226-233). Nashville: Abingdon Press.
Lee, Archie C.C. (2008). 'Engaging Lamentations and *The Lament for the South*: A Cross-Textual Reading'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 125-138). Atlanta: SBL.
Lee, D. A. (1995). 'Partnership in Easter Faith: The Role of Mary Magdalene and Thomas in John 20'. *JSNT*, 58, p.41.
Lee, Nancy. (2002). *The Singers of Lamentations*: *Cities under Siege, From Ur to Jerusalem to Sarajevo*. Leiden: Brill.
_____. (2008). 'The Singers of Lamentations: (A)scribing (De)Claiming poets and Prophets'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 33-46). Atlanta: SBL.
_____. (2010). *Lyrics of Lament*: *From Tragedy to Transformation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Lee, N., and Mandolfo C. (eds.). (2008). *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts*. SBL: Atlanta.
Lendrum, S., and Syme, G. (1992). *Gift of Tears*: *A Practical Approach to Loss and Bereavement Counselling*. London, New York: Routledge.
Lewin, K. (1958). 'Group Decisions and Social Change'. In E.E. Maccoby, T.M. Newcomb and E.L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology* (3rd ed.), (pp. 197-211). London: Methuen.
_____. (2006). *Resolving Social Conflicts: Field Theory in Social Science*. Washington: American Psychological Association.
Lewis, C.S. (1961). *A Grief Observed*. London: Faber and Faber.
Linafelt, T. (ed.). (2000a). *Strange Fire: Reading the Bible after the Holocaust.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
_____. (2000b). *Surviving Lamentations, Catastrophe, Lament and Protest in the After Life of a Biblical Book*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Lindblom, J. (1962). *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
Littlewood, J. (1992). *Aspects of Grief*. London: Tavistock/Routlege.
Lopez, D.S. Jnr. (ed.). (1995). *Religions of India in Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Lundin, R., Thiselton A.C., and Walhout, C. (1985). *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Lurker, M. (1980). *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Egypt*: *An Illustrated Dictionary.* London: Thames and Hudson.
Lynch, B. (1996). 'Pink Therapy'. In D. Davies and C. Neal (eds.), *Religious and Spiritual Conflicts* (pp.199-207). Buckingham: Open University Press.
Mackintosh, H.R. (1947.) *Types of Modern Theology.* London: Nisbet and Co.
Magonet, J. (1994). *A Rabbi Reads the Psalms*. London: SCM Press.
Maier, C.M. (2008). *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion*: *Gender Space and the Sacred in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Mandolfo, C.R. (2007). *Daughter Zion Talks Back to the Prophets*: *A Dialogic Theology of the Book of Lamentations*. Atlanta: SBL.
Manguel, A. (2007). *Homer's The Iliad and the Odyssey*: *A Biography*. London: Atlantic Books.
Marcus, R. (1947). 'Alphabetic Acrostics in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods'. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 6(2), 109-115.

Markham, I. S. (2005). 'A Theology of Engagement'. *Conversation in Religion and Theology, Companion Journal to Reviews in Religion and Theology,* 2, 140-149.
Marris, P. (1974). *Loss and Change*. New York: Pantheon Books.
Martin, L.L., and Tesser, A. (1996). 'Some Ruminative Thoughts'. In R.S.Wyer Jr. (ed.), *Ruminative Thoughts*: *Advances in Social Cognition Volume IX* (pp. 1-47). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
Matthews, V.H. (1995). 'The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative'. *JSOT*, 20(65), 25-36).
McHale, B. (1987). *Postmodernist Fiction*. London: Routledge.
McKim, D. K. (ed.). (1998). *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*. Downers Grove Il: Inter Varsity Press.
Meek, T.J. (1980). 'Lamentations'. In G.A. Buttrick (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 6*, (pp.). Nashville: Abingdon Press.
Mernissi, F. (1991). *Women and Islam*: *An Historical andTheological Enquiry* (tr. M.J. Lakeland). Oxford: Blackwell.
Mettinger, T.N.D. (1995). *No Graven Image*? *Israelite Aniconism in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context*. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International.
Meyers, C. (1992). 'Everyday Life: women in the Period of the Hebrew Bible'. In C.A. Newsom, and S.H. Ringe (eds.), *The Women's Bible Commentary* (pp. 244-51). London: SPCK.
Meynet, R. (1998). *Rhetorical Analysis*: *An Introduction to Biblical Rhetoric.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Middlemas, J. (2004). 'The Violent Storm in Lamentations'. *JSOT* 29(1), 81-97.
_____. (2005). *The Troubles of Templeless Judah*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Miller, Alice. (1992). *Breaking Down the Wall of Silence*: *To Join the Waiting Child* (tr. S. Worrall). London: Virago Press.
_____. (2002). *For Your Own Good*: *Hidden Cruelty in Child-rearing and the Roots of Violence* (tr. Hildegarde and Hunter Hannum). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Miller, C.W. (2001). 'Reading Voices: Personification, Dialogism, and the Reader of Lamentations 1'. *BI*, 9(4), 393-408.
_____. (2002). 'The Book of Lamentations in Recent Research'. *CBR*, 1, 19-29.
Miller, D.A. (1981). *Narrative and its Discontents*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Miller, D. B. (2002). *Symbol and Rhetoric in Ecclesiastes*: *The Place of hebel in Qohelet's Work.* Atlanta: SBL.
Miller, P. D. (1986). *Interpreting the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Mills, M. E. (2003). *Reading Ecclesiastes*: *A Literary and Cultural Exegesis.* Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
Minnick, W. C. (1968). *The Art of Persuasion* (2nd edn.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
Moberly, R.W.L. (1997). 'Lament'. In W.A. Van Gemeren (gen. ed.) *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis Vol. 1*. Carlisle: Paternoster.
Moi, T. (ed.). (1986). *The Kristeva Reader.* Oxford: Blackwell.
Morla, V. (2004). *Lamentaciones*. Estella, España: Verbo Divino.
Morris, W. (2008). *Theology Without Words: Theology in the Deaf Community*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Morse, B. (2003). 'The Lamentations Project: Biblical Mourning through Modern Montage'. *JSOT*, 28(1), 113-127.
Murphy, R.E. (1975). 'Wisdom and Yahwism'. In Flanagan and Robinson (eds.), *No Famine in the Land*: *Studies in Honour of J.L. McKenzie* (pp. 118-120). Missoula MT: Scholars Press.
Naegelsbach, C.W.E. (1871*). The Lamentations of Jeremiah: Theologically and Homiletically Expounded*. New York: Charles Scribner.
Neusner, J. (ed.). (1994). *Judaism Transcends Catastrophe*: *God, Torah, and Israel Beyond the Holocaust. Vol. 1 Faith Renewed*: *The Judaic Affirmation Beyond the Holocaust*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press.
Nida, E. A. (1960). *Message and Mission*. New York: Harper and Row.
_____. (1964). *Toward a Science of Translating*: *With Special Reference to Principles and Procedures Involved in Bible Translating*. Leiden: Brill.
Nida, E. A., and Taber, C. R. (1974). *Helps for Translators*: *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: Brill.
Niditch, S. (1979). 'The Wronged Woman Righted: An Analysis of Genesis 38'. *Harvard Theological Review*, 72, 143-49.
_____. (1993). *War in the Hebrew Bible*: *A Study in the Ethics of Violence*. New York: Oxford University Press.
_____. (1997). *Oral World and Written Word*: *Orality and Literacy in Ancient Israel*. London: SPCK.
Oatley, K. (2004). *Emotions*: *A brief History*. Oxford: Blackwell.
O'Connor, K.M. (1992). 'Lamentations'. In C.A. Newsom, and S.H. Ringe (eds.), *The Women's Bible Commentary* (pp. 178-182). London: SPCK.
_____. (2001). 'Lamentations'. In New Interpreter's Bible Vol. 6 (pp. 1013-1072). Nashville: Abingdon.
_____. (2002). *Lamentations and the Tears of the World*. New York: Orbis.
_____. (2008). 'Voices Arguing About Meaning'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 27-31). Atlanta: SBL.
O'Dowd, R. P. (May 2005). *The Wisdom of Torah*: *Epistemology in Deuteronomy and the Wisdom Literature*. PhD. Thesis Liverpool University.
Ohler, A. (1985). *Studying the Old Testament*: *From Tradition to Canon*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
Oliver, K. (ed.). (2002). *The Portable Kristeva*. New York: Colombia University Press.
Oliviere, D., Hargreaves, R. and Monroe, B. (1998). *Good Practices in Palliative Care*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
Olyan, S.M. (2004). *Biblical Mourning*: *Ritual and Social Dimensions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Oppenheim, A. L. (1972). *Ancient Mesopotamia*: *Portrait of a Dead Civilisation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Palgrave F.T. (ed.). (1975). *The Golden Treasury of English Songs and Lyrics*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons.
Palmer, S., and Laungani, P. (eds.). (1999). *Counselling in a Multicultural Society*. London: Sage Publications.
Parker, I. (1997). *Psychoanalytic Culture*: *Psychoanalytic Discourse in Western Society*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
Parkes, C. M. (1972). *Bereavement*: *Studies of Grief in Adult Life*. London: Penguin Books.

Parkes, C. M., Laungani, P., and Young, B. (1997). *Death and Bereavement Across Cultures*. London, New York: Routledge.
Parkes, C. M., Stevenson-Hinde, J., and Marris, P. (eds.). (1991). *Attachment Across the Life Cycle*. London, New York: Tavistock/Routledge.
Parkes, C.M., and Weiss, R.S. (1983). *Recovery from Bereavement*. New York: Basic Books Inc.
Parrinder, E.G. (1981). *African Traditional Religion*. London: Sheldon Press.
Perdue, L. G., Blenkinsopp, J., Collins, J.J., and Meyers, C. (1997). *Families in Ancient Israel*. Louisville: John Knox Press.
Petersen D.L., and Richards, K.H. (1992). *Interpreting Hebrew Poetry*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Petty, R. E., and Cacioppo, J. T. (1981). *Attitudes and Persuasion*: *Classic and Contemporary Approaches*. Dubuque: Brown.
Pham, X. H. T. (1999). *Mourning in the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Pritchard, J.B. (ed.). (1955). *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (2nd edn.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Provan, I. (1990). 'Reading Texts against an Historical Background: The Case of Lamentations 1'. *SJOT*, 1, 130-43.
_____. (1991). *Lamentations.* London: Marshall Pickering.
Pyper, H. (1998). 'The Selfish Text: The Bible and Memetics'. In J.C. Exum, and S.D. Moore (eds.), *Biblical Studies*/*Cultural Studies* (pp. 70-90). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
_____. (2001). 'Reading Lamentations'. *JSOT* 95, 55-69.
Rayner, Rabbi J.D., and Stern, Rabbi C. (eds.). (1995). *Siddur Lev Chadash*: *Services and Prayers for Weekdays and Sabbaths, Festivals and Various Occasions*. London: Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues.
Read, H. (1928). *English Prose Style*. London: G. Bell and Sons.
Redgrave, R. (1844). *The Governess*. Retrieved 1st July 2009 from: http://www.vam.ac.uk/images/image/47866-popup.html
Re'emi, S. P. (1984). *God's People in Crisis*: *A Commentary on the Book of Lamentations*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Reid, W. L. (1993). *Dialogues of the Word*: *The Bible as Literature According to Bakhtin.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Reimer, D. J. (2002). 'Good Grief? A Psychological Reading of Lamentations'. *ZAW,* 114(4), 542-559.
Renkema, J. (1998). *Lamentations*. Leuven: Peeters.
Rhys-Jones, G. (ed.). (1979). *Wisdom Energy 2.* Ulverston, Cumbria: Publications for Wisdom Culture, Conishead Priory.
Richards, G. (ed.). (1996). *A Sourcebook of Modern Hinduism*. London: Curzon Press.
Richards, I.A. (1961). *Principles of Literary Criticism.* London: Routledge.
_____. (1965). *The Philosophy of Rhetoric.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Riches, G., and Dawson, P. (2000). *An Intimate Loneliness*: *Supporting Bereaved Parents and Siblings*. Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
Ricoeur, P. (1970). *Freud and Philosophy*: *An Essay on Interpretation* (tr. D. Savage). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1974). *The Conflict of Interpetations* (ed. Don Ihde). Evanston: North Western University Press.
_____. (1975). 'Biblical Hermeneutics'. *Semeia*, 4, 107-45.
_____. (1976). *Interpretation Theory*: *Discourse and Surplus of Meaning*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press.
_____. (1980). *Essays on Biblical Interpretation* (ed. L. S. Mudge). London: SPCK.
_____. (1981). *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (ed. and tr. J.B. Thompson). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
_____. (1984). *Time and Narrative Vol. 1.* (tr. K. Mclaughlin and D. Pellauer). London: University of Chicago Press.
_____. (1985). *Time and Narrative Vol. 2.* (tr. K. Mclaughlin and D. Pellauer). London: University of Chicago Press.
_____. (1988). *Time and Narrative Vol. 3.* (tr. K. Mclaughlin and D. Pellauer). London: University of Chicago Press.
_____. (1991). *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*. (tr. K. Blamey, K. and J.B. Thompson). London: The Athlone Press Ltd.
_____. (1995a). *Le Juste.* Paris: Seuil.
_____. (1995b). *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur* (ed. L.E. Hahn). Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co.
_____. (2003). *The Rule of Metaphor*: *The Creation of Meaning in Language*. London: Routledge.
Ringgren, H. (1981). *Israelite Religion* (tr. D. Green). London: SPCK.
Rimmon-Kenan, S. (ed.). (1987). *Discourse in Psychoanalysis and Literature*. London and New York: Methuen.
_____. (1996). *Narrative Fiction*: *Contemporary Poetics*. London: Routledge.
Rodd, C.S. (2001). 'Psalms'. In J. Barton and J. Muddiman (eds.), *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (pp.355-405). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Rogerson, J. (ed.). (2001). *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Roget, P.M. (1979). *Roget's Thesaurus of Synonyms and Antonyms*. London: University Books.
_____. (1987). *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*. London: Longman.
Rollins, W.G., and Kille D.A. (2007). *Psychological Insight into the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Ryken, L., Wilhouit, J.C., and Longman, T. (eds.). (1998). *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery.* Downers Grove: Inter Varsity.
Rylance, R. (1994). *Roland Barthes*. London: Harvester, Wheatsheaf.
Saebo, M. (1993). 'Who is the Man in Lamentations 3? A Fresh approach to the Interpretation of the Book of Lamentations'. In A.G. Auld (ed.), *Understanding Poets and Prophets*: *Essays in Honour of George Wishart Anderson* (pp. 294-306). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Salters, R.B. (1994). *Jonah and Lamentations*: *Old Testament Guides*. Sheffield: JSOT Press.
Savory, T. (1968). *The Art of Translation*. London: Jonathan Cape.
Sawyer, J. F.A. (1989). 'Daughter of Zion and the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah: A Comparison'. *JSOT*, 44, 89-107.
Sawyer, J. F.A. (1995). 'The Ethics of Comparative Interpretation'. *CBR* 3, 153-168.

Scarry, E. (1985). *The Body in Pain*: *The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Schafer, R.M. (1986). *The Thinking Ear*. Toronto: Arcana Editions.
Schlipp, P. A., and Friedman, M. (eds.). (1967) *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing.
Schökel, L. A. (2000). *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico.
Segall, K.W. (2008). 'Lamenting the Dead in Iraq and South Africa'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 177-194). Atlanta: SBL.
Seidman, N. (1994). 'Burning the Book of Lamentations'. In C. Büchmann and C. Spiegel (eds.), *Out of the Garden*: *Women Writers on the Bible* (pp. 278-88). London: Pandora.
Sherwood, Y. (1996). *The Prostitute and the Prophet: Hosea's Marriage in Literary-Theoretical Perspective*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
_____. (2000). *A Biblical Text and its Afterlives*: *The Survival of Jonah in Western Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Shute, D. (tr. and ed.). (2002). *Commentary on the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah* by *Peter Martyr Vermigli*. Missouri: Truman State University Press.
Slavitt, D.R. (2001). *The Book of Lamentations*: *A Meditation and Translation.* Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press.
Smart, J.D. (1965). *The Old Testament in Dialogue with Modern Man.* London: Epworth Press,
Smith, B. Hernstein, (1968). *Poetic Closure*: *A study of How Poems End*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Smith, C. (2001). 'Biblical Perspectives on Power'. *JSOT*, 93, 93-110.
Smith, J. M. P. (1965). *The Prophets and their Times*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Smith-Christopher, D. (2002). *A Biblical Theology of Exile*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
Soskice, J. M. (1985). *Metaphor and Religious Language*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
_____. (2007). *The Kindness of God*: *Metaphor, Gender and Religious Language.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Spence, D. (1987). 'Narrative Recursion'. In S. Rimmon-Kenan (ed.), *Discourse in Psychoanalysis and Literature* (pp. 188-210). New York: Methuen.
Spiegel, Y. (1973). *The Grief Process*. London: SCM Press.
Stahl, N. (1995). *Law and Liminality in the Bible*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Stanley, B. (1990). *The Bible and the Flag*: *Protestant Missions and British in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Leicester: Apollos.
Stavrakopoulou, F. (2004). *King Manasseh and Child Sacrifice*: *Biblical Distortions of Historical Realities.* Berlin: Walter Gruyter.
_____. (2006). *Bones, Burials and Boundaries in the Hebrew Bible*. Presented at SOTS Summer Meeting 2006.
Steinberg, M. (1987). *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Stiebert, J. (2003). 'Human Suffering and Divine Abuse of Power in Lamentations: Reflections on Forgiveness in the Context of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Process'. *Pacifica*, 16(2), 195-215.
Stiver, D. R. (1996). *The Philosophy of Religious Language*: *Sign, Symbol and Story*. Oxford: Blackwell.
_____. (2001). *Theology after Ricoeur*: *New Directions in Hermeneutical Theology*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
Stone, K. (1999). 'Safer Text: Reading Biblical Laments in the Age of Aids'. *Theology and Sexuality*, 10, 16-27.
Stroebe, M., and Schut, H. (1998). 'Culture and Grief'. *Bereavement Care*, 17(1), 7-11.
Stroebe, M.S., Stroebe, W., and Hansson, R.O. (eds.). (1993). *Handbook of Bereavement*: *Theory Research and Intervention.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Strong, James. (1984). *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
Strongman, K.T. (1996). *The Psychology of Emotion*: *Theories of Emotion in Perspective*. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons.
Sugirtharajah, R.S. (ed.). (1991). *Voices from the Margin*: *Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. London: SPCK.
Swinton, J. (2007). *Raging with Compassion*: *Pastoral Responses to the Problem of Evil*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Switzer, D.K. (1990). 'The Dynamics of Grief'. In R.J. Hunter (ed.), *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling* (p. 472). Nashville: Abingdon Press.
Tamblin, R. (1988). *A Preface to T.S. Eliot*. London, New York: Longman.
Tate, W.R. (2006). *Interpreting the Bible*: *A Handbook of Terms and Methods*. Massachusets: Hendrickson Publishers.
Tennyson, C. (1954). *Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson*. London and Glasgow: Collins.
Thiselton, A.C. (1974). 'The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings'. *Journal of Theological Studies*, 25, 283-299.
_____. (1992). *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*. London: Harper Collins.
_____. (2002). *A Concise Encyclopaedia of the Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.
Thompson, N. (ed.). (2002). *A Guide for Human Services Practitioners*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Tiemersma, D., and Oosterling, H.A.F. (eds.). (1996). *Time and Temporality in Intercultural Perspective*. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi.
Tongqun, Lu. (1997). *A Special Study of Yu Xin*. Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press.
Valdés, M.J. (ed.). (1991). *A Ricoeur Reader*. New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
Vandevelde, P. (2005). *The Task of Interpreter*: *Text, Meaning and Negotiation*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
Van Gemeren, W.A. (gen. ed.). (1997). *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis Vol. 4*. Carlisle: Paternoster.
Vanhoozer, K. J. (1990). *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
_____. (1998). *Is there a Meaning in the Text*?: *The Bible, the Reader and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Leicester: Apollos.

Van Leeuwen, C. (1974). *'almana'*. In G.J. Botterweck, and H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Vol. 1* (pp. 413-415). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
Van Leeuwen, T. (1999). *Speech, Music, Sound.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
Vendler, H. (2007). *Our Secret Discipline*: *Yeats and Lyric Form*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Vice, S. (1997). *Introducing Bakhtin*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Vine, W.E. (ed.). (1985). *Vine's Complete Expositary Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
Von Rad, G. (1965). *Old Testament Theology Vols. I and II*. (tr. D.G.M. Stalker). Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd.
Walter, T. (1999). *On Bereavement*: *The Culture of Grief*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
_____. (2002). *The Revival of Death*. London: Routledge.
Walters, G. (1997). *Why do Christians Find it Hard to Grieve*? Carlisle: Paternoster Press.
Waltke, B.K., and O'Connor, M. (1990). *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
Warner, M. (ed.). (1990). *The Bible as Rhetoric*: *Studies in Biblical Persuasion and Credibility*. London: Routledge.
Warwick, A. (ed.). (2003). *The Nation's Favourite Poems of Remembrance*. London: BBC Books.
Watson, W.G.E. (1994). *Traditional Techniques in Classical Hebrew Verse.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
_____. (2001). *Classical Hebrew Poetry*: *A Guide to its Techniques.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
Weisberg, D. E. (2004). 'The Widow of our Discontent: Levirate Marriage in the Bible and Ancient Israel'. *JSOT*, 28(4), 403-429.
Weiser, A. (1961). *Introduction to the Old Testament*. London: DLT.
Weisman, A.D. (1972). *On Death and Denying*. New York: Behavioural Publications.
Wellard, J. (1972). *By the Waters of Babylon*. London: Hutchinson.
Wellek, R. (1981). *A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950 1*: *The Later Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wellek, R., and Warren, A. (1977). *Theory of Literature* (3rd edn.). New York: Harcourt.
West, Gerald. (2008). 'The Poetry of Job as Resource for the Articulation of Embodied Lament in the Context of HIV and AIDS in South Africa'. In N. Lee and C. Mandolfo (eds.), *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts* (pp. 195-214). Atlanta: SBL.
West, Mona. (2001). 'The Gift of Voice, the Gift of Tears: A Queer Reading of Lamentations in the Context of AIDS'. In K. Stone (ed.), *Queer Commentary and the Hebrew Bible* (pp. 140-151). London, New York: Sheffield Academic Press.
Westermann, C. (1969). *Handbook to the Old Testament* (tr. and ed. by R.H. Boyd). London: SPCK.
_____. (1980). *The Psalms*: *Structure, Content and Messages* (tr. Ralph D. Gehrke). Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House.
_____. (1981). *Praise and Lament in thePsalms* (tr. K.R. Crim, and R.N. Soulen). London, New York: T&T. Clark.

Westermann, C. (1991). *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (tr. H.C.White). Cambridge: Lutterworth Press.
_____. (1994). *Lamentations*: *Issues and Interpretation*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
Wheelwright, P. (1962). *Metaphor and Reality*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Whiston, W. (tr.). (1987). *The Works of Josephus*: *Complete and Unabridged*. Massachusets: Hendrickson Publishers Inc.
Whybray, R.N. (2001). 'Genesis'. In J. Barton and J. Muddiman (eds.), *The Oxford Bible Commentary* pp. (38-66). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Widmer, M. (2004). *Moses, God and the Dynamics of Intercessory Prayer*: *A Study of Exodus 32-34*, Forschungen sum Alten Testament.
Wigram, G.V. (1956). *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Samuel Bagster and Son, Zondervan.
Wilson Ross, N. (1981). *Buddhism*: *A Way of Life and Thought*. London: Collins.
Worden, J.W. (1983). *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy*. London: Tavistock.
Wright, M. J. (2003). *Moses in America*: *The Cultural Uses of Biblical Narrative*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Yeats, W.B. (1972). *Memoirs* (transcribed and ed. D. Donoghue). New York: Macmillan.
Zaehner, R.C. (1962). *Hinduism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.